

'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'
is upheld by the highest court to date,
the Fourth Circuit Court in Richmond.
page 14

Two gay teenagers
are sworn in as
Youth Commissioners.
page 3



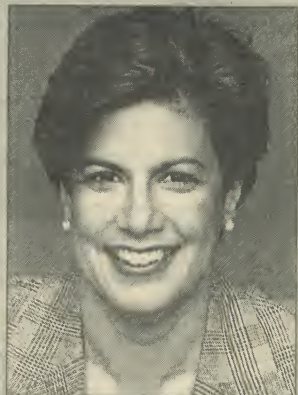
Scott Thompson
talks about *Kids In The*
Hall and *'Brain Candy.'*
see Arts section



BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 26 • No. 15 • 11 April 1996

Serving the Gay and Lesbian Community for over 25 Years



Supervisor Susan Leal.

Clinton receives Leal at White House

by Mary Ann Swissler

The theme of the '96 campaign could be shaping up as "It's coalition-building, folks," judging from an April 3 meeting convened by President Bill Clinton, attended by San Francisco Supervisor Susan Leal and eleven other leaders from gay, senior citizen, labor and business organizations around the country.

Leal told the *B.A.R.* that during the 90-minute free-wheeling conversation, Clinton never specifically mentioned the importance of building coalitions, but it was clear from the diverse representation of individuals that the President valued them. "He kept emphasizing that we have

page 2 ►

Migden gets moving

by Mary Ann Swissler

Newly elected lesbian State Assemblywoman Carole Migden was handed four plum committee assignments Monday, April 8, by a Republican leadership that she had expected to send her to legislative Siberia.

Migden landed committee assignments on Budget, Transportation, Natural Resources, and Labor and Employment. As San Francisco supervisor, Migden served as Budget Committee chair in 1993 and was recognized for her number-crunching abilities.

When asked why Speaker of the House Curt Pringle would seat Migden on these committees, Assemblymember Sheila Kuehl responded that it should definitely not be interpreted as a sign of compromise. "I can't imagine that *anything* the speaker does is done to extend an olive branch to the Democrats," she told the *B.A.R.*

Any committee posts held by Democrats right now are mere figureheads when the time comes to vote, since Republicans hold the majority of votes on every single committee in the State Assembly, and they answer to a Republican speaker who is also a member of the Christian Coalition.

"And it's even more heavily stacked the other way than ever before," Kuehl said. She was pulled off as Judiciary Committee vice-chair when Pringle was elected speaker, after Willie Brown stepped down to run for mayor of San Francisco.

Some plums

Migden will be filling one of two open seats on the Budget committee, on which Kuehl, the only other openly gay or lesbian Sacramento lawmaker, also sits. There will be many long impassioned speeches but few, if any, wins on the Democratic scorecard in the months to come, Kuehl predicted. "She'll be frustrat-

page 2 ►



Looking good:
Assemblywoman
Carole Migden at
the April 6 Cable
Car Awards.

Darlene/Photo Graphics

Suit says illegal eviction attempt hospitalized PWA

by Dennis Conkin

A controversial Tenderloin landlord has been sued, and a San Francisco cop will be the subject of a misconduct complaint, after a gay man with AIDS was hospitalized with convulsions in the midst of an illegal eviction attempt March 25.

An attorney for the Tenderloin Housing Clinic has filed a lawsuit with a complaint for damages, and asked for a preliminary injunction to keep the landlord, Adam Sparks, from attempting to evict Ted Chopp, a former employee.

An eyewitness to the eviction attempt told the *Bay Area Reporter* she intends to file a formal misconduct complaint with the Office of Citizen Complaints against Central Station Sergeant David Kmita for his participation in the incident.

Tina Rendeiro told the *B.A.R.* when she and her husband drove by the Taylor Street residence of Chopp and his partner Robert Sanchez March 25, they saw a Fire Department truck, an ambulance, and a police car parked in front.

Rendeiro has known Chopp for a decade, and knew he had been very ill and had been having troubles with Sparks, his former employer.

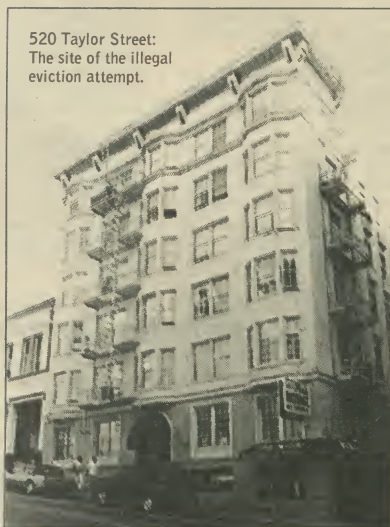
In a declaration to the Superior Court, she says, "When I went into the building, I saw Adam Sparks at the front steps. I asked him, 'What did you do to him?'"

"Mr. Sparks responded, 'We found him in convulsions.'"

Rendeiro said she ran into the apartment shared by Chopp and Sanchez, and found paramedics working on Chopp.

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520 Taylor Street:
The site of the illegal
eviction attempt.



Phil Miglance, Jr.

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▼ Community Dental Update ▼



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Sister Candy Cide (right) and Reverend Mother Superior Abyss the Pretty enjoy the weather Easter Sunday in Collingwood Park despite the lack of an official permit for the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence's annual Easter event that attracts worshipful throngs to the area.

AFP's next Family Forum topic: What is gender, anyway?

by Mary Ann Swissler

The innocuous-sounding yet explosive topic of gender development will be the subject of a discussion sponsored by the Alternative Family Project (AFP) on Monday, April 29, from 7 to 9 p.m.

"Gender Development in Children," which is free and open to the public, is part of a series of

monthly forums on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender parenting that AFP has sponsored this year. They also offer family counseling, support groups, and various social events.

"Our daughters and sons are being raised in a society that has a pretty narrow view of gender appropriateness," said Cheryl Deaner, Project Coordinator of the AFP. "This forum is designed not only to help parents nurture

their child's gender development, but also to help us as adults to reflect upon how we come to terms with our own inner sense of gender." ▼

All Family Forums are held at the Unitarian Center, located at 1187 Franklin Street, on the corner of Geary. For more information call (415) 566-5683.

Migden

◀ page 1

ed like the rest of us," she said.

But all in all, she added, "My guess is that no matter where Carole sits, she will make an impact."

A member of Migden's San Francisco office, Michael Colbruno, remained upbeat, telling the B.A.R., "She got some plums. This is stuff that freshmen don't get."

But, as Migden told the B.A.R.,

here's good news and bad news. The good news is I received good committee assignments. The bad news is they meet on the same day at the same time."

The Budget and Labor and Employment committees both meet Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m., and Natural Resources and Transportation both meet Mondays at 1:30 p.m.

Colbruno emphasized that, in the event of schedule conflicts, legislative aides inform their respective bosses when it is time to

vote.

A replacement for Migden's seat on the Board of Supervisors has yet to materialize. After weeks of speculation, Mayor Willie Brown had promised to make his announcement by Monday, April 8, but delayed it again until at least the end of the week so he can attend the funeral of U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, according to spokesperson P.J. Johnston. Secretary Brown's plane crashed April 3 in a remote area of Bosnia. ▼

Leal

◀ page 1

to show people that gay and lesbian people are more than cardboard cutouts. They're people, they get up and go to work everyday and get on with their lives," said Leal, who was the only lesbian or gay elected official in the group.

Also attending from the gay community were Elizabeth Birch, Kevin Boykin, and David Mixner.

The concept of "shared destinies" was repeatedly emphasized by the President, which Leal said she agreed with. "It wasn't like, 'Okay, let's just meet with you queers.' I liked the fact that we were all together and our issues were discussed," said Leal.

Leal said that she brought up the danger of block-granting Medicaid funds to California. "I know that it's not a sexy issue, but it is of paramount importance," because 40 percent of PWAs in California rely on MediCal. "To me, if you block-grant to the states, we're cooked. It means death," she said.

No conversation with the President would have been complete without telling him what he already knew—that the gay community was disappointed in the Department of Defense's HIV ban, which Clinton has promised to veto, and his "Don't ask, don't tell" gays-in-the-military policy. Again, Leal said that she found Clinton to be genuinely concerned about demands from the gay community, and that he re-

peatedly stated that he felt fundie attacks in Washington and around the country were "unfair." Leal added, "I've been around a lot of straight elected officials, and he is one of the few who is actually comfortable around gays."

She noted that the White House sent representatives to Capitol Hill to lobby on behalf of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, but the Republican-controlled Congress will not even schedule committee hearings.

Leal said that the meeting was broken up with news of Ron Brown's death in an airplane crash in Bosnia.

Before leaving, she said, a few people underscored that they appreciated the meeting because "We're not all the same." ▼

Gay Community Center deal to close soon

Backers of the proposed gay community center will have closed their long-anticipated land deal by the end of this month, they say.

Bob Dadurka, chair of the Real Estate committee of the Community Center Project, told the B.A.R., "We're working out the language of the agreement, basically," and it should be finalized by the end of April.

Dadurka said the owner of the property is aware that it will be another year before he is able to receive the \$1.1 million asking price. That is the amount of time it will take for the Redevelopment Agency to process the required studies including an environmental impact report. ▼

—Mary Ann Swissler

COMMUNITY NEWS

Now they just need a budget

Youth Commission includes gay teens

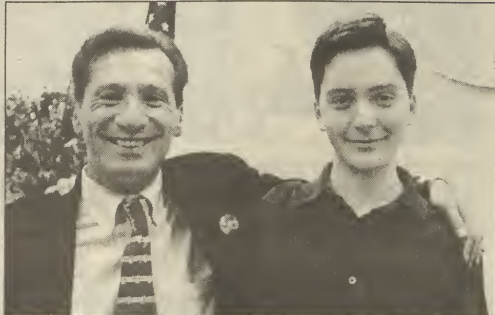
by Mary Ann Swissler

Mayor Willie Brown, himself a former recreation center leader in San Francisco, swore in 17 charter members of the newly-formed city Youth Commission on Tuesday, April 2.

Two openly gay members were honored by a seat on the commission, Jesse Costello-Good, age 17, appointed by Supervisor Tom Ammiano, and Kent Khounsombath, age 19, appointed by Supervisor Mabel Teng.

Supervisor Angela Alioto and Mayor Brown spoke before a packed Board of Supervisors gallery of proud parents and friends who cheered when the name of each new member, either in or barely out of high school, was called.

Alioto created Prop R, which passed with over 62 percent of the vote in the November 1994 election; Prop. F, which made the Youth Commission part of the City Charter, passed in 1995. Commissioners will report to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor on the impact on youth of legislation and policies, and will also offer their advice on what programs need to be put in place to benefit the children and youth of San Francisco. The San Francisco Youth Commission is made up of seventeen Commissioners,



Supervisor Tom Ammiano (left) poses with his Youth Commission appointee, Jesse Costello-Good.

from ages 12 to 23 years old, who serve a one-year term.

She told the laid-back but clearly motivated group, "Never listen to people who say you can't do anything, young people." She urged other applicants who did not make the cut to remain involved in their communities and to re-apply next year.

Brown reminded them, "You must be available to answer citizens' inquiries from all areas of San Francisco."

Afterward, Commissioner Costello-Good told the B.A.R. that he caught the politics bug while volunteering on Roberta Achtenberg's mayoral campaign. He attends University High

School in Pacific Heights. His visibly proud mother, JoAnn Costello, said, "He's a brave guy," adding that he was really into science and math but since the mayor's race, Jesse "has been maniacally pursuing politics." The B.A.R. was unable to locate Kent Khounsombath for comment. He lives in the Tenderloin area.

A motion that was passed on Monday, April 8, urging the creation of an operating budget beginning in the 1996-97 budget year, could give the Youth Commissioners something more than play money with which to make policy. The measure was co-authored by Supervisors Angela Alioto, Sue Bierman and Michael Yaki. ▼

Gay Prom '96 underway

2nd event hopes to draw bigger crowd

by Cynthia Laird

Planning is underway for the Lambda Youth Group's second Gay Prom, and organizers hope more young people will attend this year's event.

Ken Athey, prom coordinator, said organizers are in the process of lining up sponsors for this year's event, which is scheduled for June 14 at Centennial Hall in Hayward. The theme this year is "In the Spirit of Freedom," Athey said.

Athey added that Lambda already has a radio sponsor, talk show host Ken McPherson of *Hibernia Beach*. McPherson, co-host Val Keenan, and Ben Carlson are expected to attend the event, Athey noted. The San Francisco-based Hibernia Beach is America's longest gay radio talk show and has been on the air for seven years.

"Ken, Val, and Ben are hoping to reach a lot more youth," Athey said, adding that Lambda Youth Group hopes to get the word out through the Internet this year.

Last year's gay prom drew approximately 200 gay and lesbian young people from all over the Bay Area as well as Stockton and Sacramento.

This year, Athey said the Lambda Youth Group plans to rent all of Centennial Hall, rather than a portion as they did last

year. The decor is being planned around a New York art deco theme for the black-tie event.

"We're going to have a much more elaborate program this year," Athey said, adding the group hopes to solicit advertisers for the program as well as corporate and individual sponsors.

Finances are tough this year, Athey noted, and said members of Lambda are working rapidly to get sponsors on board and to raise money. Members of Gays and Lesbians Organized for Betterment and Equality (GLOBE) are also planning to meet next week to discuss having a fundraiser for the prom, Athey said.

Last year's event was a huge success, as well as the Bay Area's first gay prom. Couples danced the night away in an atmosphere of relaxation and acceptance. There was scant opposition at the prom last year. Members of a local religious group briefly picketed the event, but no one who was there seemed deterred by their presence. Additionally, there were many chaperones in attendance and they also enjoyed themselves. No problems were reported by authorities or those who attended the event.

Athey noted that there will also be chaperones on hand this year, and that the event is alcohol-free.

Thanks to the success of last year's prom, the word is already out this year, he said. ▼

For more information about Gay Prom '96 or to be a sponsor, contact Athey at (510) 247-8200.

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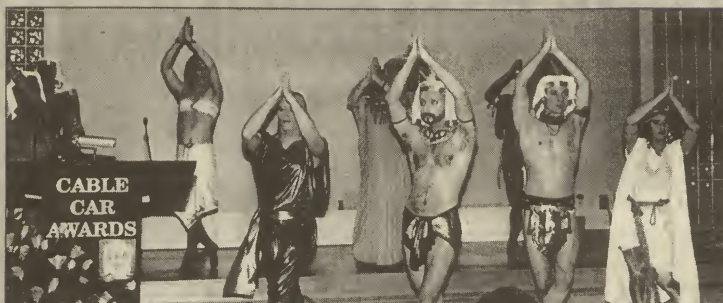
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Ancient rites



Dancers at the April 6 Cable Car Awards walk like an Egyptian at the annual soiree celebrating the achievements of many in our community. One of this year's honorees at the always colorful event was the B.A.R.'s own Michael Botkin. About \$2,000, a portion of the evening's proceeds, went to the AIDS Legal Referral Panel.

Compassionate Pope gets humanitarian award

'The consummate counseling professional'

by Hakeem Oseni II

San Francisco gay rights and Native American rights activist Dr. Mark Pope is the recipient of the 1996 Human Rights Award from the California Association for Counseling and Development, an award given to the counseling professional in California who most represents the ideals of human rights advocacy.

Pope has been the chair of the CACD Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Education Committee for many years, is the chair of the Association for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Issues in Counseling at the national level, and is a member of both the American Counseling Association's Committee on Human Rights and the American Psychological Association's Committee on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Concerns.

Pope has been an activist since high school, and told the *Bay Area Reporter* that attending Kent State University in 1969 accelerated the process. "Because of that period of time," he said, "I became very politicized."

Pope came out of the closet his junior year in college, by which time he had transferred to the University of Michigan. As vice president of the student body, he and three other students got involved in the landmark case *University of Michigan v. Gay Liberation Front*. Ironically, he was considered one of three non-gay members of the GLF's executive

committee who went to the Supreme Court and won the right for gay student organizations to be represented on campuses nationwide. "I had to stand up for my beliefs," he said, "and after that I came out."

Pope went on to receive a master's degree in counseling and then moved to Chicago to attend law school. "I hated law school," he recalls. He got involved in Beckman House Gay Community Center there and became a counselor at the confidential venereal disease clinic before establishing the first gay and lesbian career counseling program in Chicago. It was only a matter of time before he was elected to the American Civil Liberties Union Illinois board of directors, as their first openly gay candidate.

Counseling the counselors

Pope's activism soon carried into his professional field, as he began to take on the American Counseling Association.

"I started changing the belief systems of counselors, and counseling psychologists about working with gay men and lesbians," he said. "By being open about it [being gay], and being visible."

"I think visibility is the most important thing to do in any profession," he told the *B.A.R.*

By being so out and visible in his profession, Pope helped bring gay and lesbian issues to the surface of career counseling. "We are mentoring other career researchers in the area of gay and

lesbian career development to really establish this area of study in the research literature," he said.

Pope represented CACD and three other organizations when he testified in support of establishing a counseling program to aid gay and lesbian students in the San Francisco Unified High School District. And, as a gay man of Cherokee ancestry, Pope facilitated San Francisco's first gay and lesbian Native American support group for HIV-positive people, at the American Indian AIDS Institute.

He has also done work in Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong, and has written extensively on gay and lesbian issues in the mental health profession. His chapter in a book published by the American Counseling Association on the bias in the interpretation of psychological tests with gay and lesbian clients is being used as the seminal work in this area by the APA's Committee on Lesbian and Gay Concerns. Also, in a recent issue of the *Journal of Counseling and Development*, Pope argued convincingly for an inclusive definition of "multiculturalism" that specifically includes gays and lesbians in any definition of the word.

"This Human Rights Award is a tribute to his life of unselfish devotion to his community and society," said CACD Human Rights Committee Chair Frank Gutierrez. "Mark is the ideal and the role model of the consummate counseling professional — helping, caring, loving." ▼

Women and HIV advocacy training workshop scheduled

by Mary Ann Swissler

The Women's AIDS Network is holding an HIV Public Policy Training in preparation for two important AIDS lobbying efforts at the state and national level in May.

The Women and HIV Public Policy Training will be free and open to all women interested in participating in the legislative

process, on Saturday, April 13 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. It will be held at 972 Market Street, located between 5th and 6th streets, on the 7th floor.

The AIDS Lobby Day in Sacramento is scheduled for May 6, and AIDS Watch '96 will be held in Washington, D.C. May 19 through 21.

No experience is necessary with policies and laws concerning HIV and AIDS. HIV-positive

women are especially encouraged to participate.

The Women's AIDS Network advocates and provides for the development and improvement of public policies, education and services for the diverse population of women infected with and affected by HIV. ▼

For more information call (415) 621-4160.

Don't meth with the Castro



Phil Migliare, Jr.

Although former tenants of a 17th Street meth house and erstwhile sex club were evicted recently by the San Francisco Sheriff's Eviction Team, neighbors complain that former tenants still loiter at the site. Police arrested one individual on April 3 at about midnight after he was observed trying to break into the site. At least two dumpster loads of trash and junk have been removed from the house since the eviction. The absentee landlords of the house live in Hawaii but have been ordered to appear in Superior Court on April 11 in connection with the city's drug abatement enforcement action against the property.

Illegal eviction

◀ page 1

The Humane Society

Rendeiro says in her declaration that Kmita said he, Sparks, and manager Ed Manfutt had gone into the apartment, and Chopp had "gone into convulsions."

"Kmita said that it was an eviction, and that they were waiting for the Humane Society to pick up the cat and then he was going to change the locks."

When Rendeiro demanded to know where Sanchez was, Kmita told her that only Chopp and the cat lived in the apartment, the lawsuit alleges.

Kmita then argued with her when she said that Sanchez also lived at the site, according to the suit.

"I asked him what the hell they were doing up there, that Sparks had been dealing with Ted's attorney," the complaint says.

When Rendeiros started looking for her husband to tell him to wait while she went to find Sanchez, the officer bolted.

"He acted like he had his hand caught in the cookie jar," she said.

"I've never seen a cop run out the back door before in my life. What's really sad about this is that we have the best police department in San Francisco. We really do."

Kmita told the *Bay Area Reporter* that he had received a "call to respond to a trespassing," and that the incident turned out actually be "an owner and ex-manager dispute."

According to San Francisco Sheriff's Department spokesman Eileen Hirst, the only San Francisco law enforcement officers who may legally evict tenants are sheriff's deputies — and then only pursuant to an order of the court to restore the property to its landowner.

Hirst said police are allowed to evict trespassers, such as residents of single room occupancy hotels who have lived in the room for fewer than 30 days and have no tenant's rights. Chopp had tenant's rights.

'Don't let them hurt me'

Rendeiro was able to get the paramedics to take Chopp to Kaiser Hospital instead of San Francisco General.

Attorneys for Chopp then had to seek a restraining order to keep Sparks from showing up at Chopp's Kaiser Hospital bedside, after he made one visit the day after the eviction attempt.

Rendeiro says Chopp was terrorized by the incident when she visited him a short time later.

"His eyes were all 'scrunched up and when I touched his arm, he put his hands to his face like he was trying to protect himself and

said, 'Don't hurt me.'"

"I told him it was Tina and he opened his eyes and said, 'Tina don't let them hurt me.' He appeared terrified, and was unable to talk further about the incident."

Chopp has been released from the hospital, and Superior Court proceedings in the matter have been continued until May.

Sparks did not return *Bay Area Reporter* calls for comment. ▼

April 16 party in Marin won't tax you too much

by Mary Ann Swissler

Twelve different Marin nonprofits will benefit from a post-tax day party sponsored by the Marin Business and Professional Association.

Their annual Rainbow Dollar Charities will be held this Tuesday, April 16 at Joe Lo Coco's Banquet Room in Greenbrae, from 6 to 8 p.m. Their motto is "Bury your tax resentment and dance on the IRS grave." A \$5 donation is requested, which will buy live music by the band "Time Machine," along with hors d'oeuvres, wine,

and soft drinks. Wine will also be on sale, with proceeds going to the Rainbow Dollar Charities.

Groups that will receive donations this year include Big Brothers/Big Sisters; Bread and Roses; Community Action Marin; Hospice of Marin; Marin Abused Women's Center; Marin AIDS Interfaith; Marin AIDS Project; Meals of Marin; Slide Ranch; Spectrum Center; Stonewall Alliance; and the YWCA. ▼

Call Bob Bednars at (415) 925-5225, extension 223 for ticket information.

Correction: All proceeds of the gaming tables from Wild Heart Productions fundraising party on April 13 will be donated to the Women's Cancer Resource Center. In the March 28 edition of the B.A.R. it was indicated that proceeds of the ticket sales, as well, would benefit the WCRC. We regret the error.



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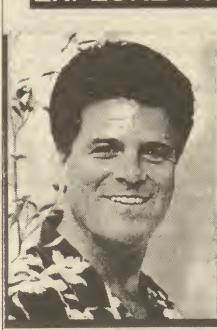
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Party animals

The entire staff of the Bay Area Reporter would like to thank all of our readers and supporters who came to our 25th anniversary party. Your kind remarks and well wishes were much appreciated. We are very pleased with your comments on our new format. Changes sometimes confuse people, and they are not sure if the changes are for the better or not. While we have changed the paper's format and type fonts over the years to bring the paper a fresh and new look, these changes have always been done subtly and have not been quite so noticeable. We decided that with the modern technology at our disposal, a complete re-vamping was in order. We are glad of your acceptance.

Thanks must also be given to the management and staff of the Pleasuredome who hosted our birthday bash. To the volunteer DJs Leo Brown, Phil B. and David Harness, for digging out oldies from the seventies and early eighties, also to the lone fan dancer who showed up, we know you

had a good time. To Shan Carr, who did the emceeing for the event, and to Pussy Tourette, both deserve our kudos. The food was catered by Theo Broma and what a delicious spread of food it was. Everyone enjoyed it, although many were torn between the gorgeous servers. The surprise of the evening was a three foot birthday cake, a combination birthday and anniversary cake with the picture of publisher Bob Ross in icing. This was a joint effort by Mike Salinas and Audrey Joseph.

The evening was a success because of the fact that many of you took the time to stop by and wish us well. We appreciated that gesture, your comments and thoughts were all welcome, and we will also look forward to implementing some of your suggestions. Last but certainly not least, we were glad to have the AIDS Emergency Fund the recipient of your donations. We raised over \$1,500 in donations from the door and others who gave additional money.

Thank you all for your support. ▼



Editorial



Former Empress Donna Sachet (left) and current Empress Cockatiella (right) latch on to everyone's favorite hunky pierced and tattooed bartender at the B.A.R.'s 25th anniversary bash at Pleasuredome April 4. Said bartender seem to enjoy the constant pressing of flesh, and a good time was had by all.

Retooling the AIDS model

by Brian Basinger

As it currently stands, an oligarchy rules the San Francisco AIDS Model. I state this fact because all third-party payer systems tend to leave the majority of information and decision-making in the hands of the few instead of the many. The San Francisco AIDS Model is a third-party payer system and therefore an oligarchy. As most economists and the U.S. court system have consistently determined, oligarchies and monopolies are inherently detrimental to the consumer. We all understand that there are times when these systems are necessary. Public utilities, public education, and the CARE Council/AIDS Office are examples of these necessary systems. But we cannot lose sight of the reality that these systems have a natural tendency to limit innovation and customer satisfaction. We have the responsibility and the ability to make minor adjustments in the way that this oligarchy does business that will significantly mitigate the customer unfriendly nature of this type of system.

The proposal

One such adjustment is to mimic the for-profit world by creating a mechanism for putting economic power in the hands of the person consuming the services. In a competitive environment, the decisions are made by the many (the customers). When the customer is satisfied, they reinforce management decisions by voting with their money. We can mimic this system by creating a mechanism that efficiently puts economic power in the hands of the consumer. Short of going to a voucher system, we can put the vote in the hands of the consumer by creating a dynamic, on-going, standardized, independent customer satisfaction survey tied to funding. Customers aren't voting with their dollars, they are voting through the survey. If an agency meets agreed-upon minimum levels of customer satisfaction, that agency can receive funding; if not, they fail. The tie to funding should not be complete, but should be weighted with regards to other systemic needs. Thus, the decision-making will be shared between the primary consumers, the customers, and the secondary consumers, the funders.

In addition, a customer hotline should be created. This hotline takes calls from customers with questions, concerns and other input. It generates monthly reports quantifying calls by specific situation, service cat-

egory, provider, and complete demographics. Reports are distributed to AIDS Office, CARE Council, PWAC, and service providers for review and joint recommendations. This will create an "Early Warning System" in which all invested parties can work together to pro-actively address inevitable glitches in services.

The scope

To insure credibility, this system must be structured to capture CARE eligible customers. It is imperative that we know when and why customers are not accessing services. Is the system "too overwhelming?" Have they had a bad experience? Is it the history or reputation that a specific provider has in their community? Did an overwhelmed staffperson simply fail to return their call in a timely manner, thereby causing them to give up before receiving services? Did they have a need that the system has yet to identify? This kind of information will be a useful tool for community advocates as well as a sound management tool for providers to determine if these committed advocates are basing their call to action based on their own personal impression or on quantifiable, objective data.

This also needs to be a daily, on-going endeavor. In the competitive model, customers vote about their satisfaction every single day. The instrument that is developed needs to be available every single day to every single customer the moment they walk in the door. This will give us a dynamic feedback system. I would encourage making this survey valid by going through the process of Independent Review. I wholeheartedly endorse the concept of structuring the model to accommodate establishing a baseline and follow-up surveys according to accepted scientific principles in order to determine what aggregate affect on outcomes that this feedback mechanism creates.

The teeth

This data can be used to develop and consistently refine standards of service as an objective measure of performance of customer satisfaction. In order to insure that this does not become another series of reports collecting dust, it must be tied to funding. It is appropriate for service providers to value the satisfaction of their primary customers, the clients, on a par with the satisfaction of their secondary customers, the AIDS Office. Therefore, I propose that meeting minimum standards of customer satisfaction be given funding

weight equal to that of contract compliance.

Other benefits

The implementation of this system will provide an additional long-term benefit for AIDS service delivery in San Francisco. Management will have an effective tool for determining the appropriate cost-benefit ratio of staffing levels by determining at what point does the level of increased staffing no longer correlate to the same level of increased customer satisfaction? Effective checks and balances will be created so that management resists the temptation to win a contract by low-balling the bid by not providing adequate staffing to meet service demands. Staff burn-out will be mitigated, thus saving the loss of investment in staff development and training due to turnover.

Education

The public must be educated regarding their right to give input into the services that they receive. For many people in our culture, receiving help is a cause for shame. They may not want to draw additional attention to their situation. They may also be operating under the adage that "Beggars can't be choosers." We must take steps to change this perception. These taxpayers not only have a right to have their input valued, but, as good businesspeople, we actively want to insure that we are meeting their needs. We need to develop an effective campaign informing consumers of their right to give input as well how to access the mechanisms developed for capturing this information.

Independence

In order to insure credibility, these Quality Assurance mechanisms must be implemented by an independent agency with expertise in the field. Service providers, including the DPH, should not implement their own evaluation due to appearances of a conflict of interest and due to the potential for corruption of outcomes by customers who assume that their feedback, either positive or negative, could influence future benefits.

Implications

We have a responsibility to pay very close attention to the process in which this idea is implemented. This issue is on the cutting edge of our nation's healthcare delivery system. As the city moves toward managed care, it is important that we set a standard for customer satisfaction that the City can be guided by in its negotiations with managed-care providers to insure that the voice of the consumer is not lost in our efforts to manage cost. ▼



Guest Opinion

LETTERS

Rock and role

After viewing the film *The Celluloid Closet* it appears that Armistead Maupin's criticism of Lily Tomlin's sexual status reeks of hypocrisy. During his seemingly endless time on the screen, Mr. Maupin shamelessly makes a point of his friendship with the late Rock Hudson. Mr. Hudson is an example of a powerful Hollywood icon who remained in the closet about his sexuality AND his illness until forced to come out. Lily Tomlin, on the other hand, has never publicly denied her sexuality or cloaked it with phony marriages or other heterosexual relationships.

Stephen Kocher
Gerard Alcantara
Joe Andres
San Francisco

Intimidation at the polls

On March 26, voting day, I experienced a dose of anti-gay bigotry. I went to my designated voting site located at 1095 Connecticut Street in Potrero Hill to actively participate in my rights as a San Francisco voter. This site was in the Community Building of the Potrero Hill Housing Projects, near which I have lived for almost two years. I parked my car nearby and entered the building to find that the available staff were very friendly and courteous and answered all the questions I had regarding the process. Leaving the site, I noticed the number of people loitering around outside the building had increased. When I passed a group of two or three young men I heard, "We don't allow gays in this neighborhood." I didn't respond, I didn't feel safe even making eye contact, I felt intimidated and outnumbered.

Our neighborhood has been wrought with crime for the entire time I've lived here. Car thefts, gang rapes, muggings, and vandalism are common. The unmistakable sounds of dog fights were equally common long before the media released its series of pit-bull terrier reports. I've lived in this neighborhood for a while now, and this is the first anti-gay sentiment I've experienced, and in light of this, I feel even more unsafe than I did before. I used to feel safe parking my car on the street in front of my house, but now that my face, my sexual orientation and my car have been grouped together in the eyes of my harassers, I no longer feel any sense of security.

The signs posted around the voting center depicting "100 feet" indicate that people cannot loiter within 100 feet of the building. These young individuals were well within that range. My voting site was clearly an unsafe location. I called the San Francisco Registrar's office the following morning to make a complaint and was greeted by a recording that informed me that all lines were busy and to call back later. Earlier in the day, my roommate contacted the Registrar to inquire after alternate possible voting sites and was informed that he couldn't vote anywhere else as it "only caused complications."

Considering the Potrero Hill Housing Project's reputation for crime and violence, I can hardly believe that it was a site chosen with any thought whatsoever for the safety of the voters. Perhaps a necessary shakedown on this decision-making process is far overdue. Exactly how much are we supposed to deal with to determine the fate of our city? How much danger do we have to place ourselves in to practice what is our right?

It is a constitutional right as a U.S. Citizen to practice the 14th Amendment free of harassment or fear of any kind of persecution before, during or after the voting process. If my sense of security and personal safety cannot be provided at any particular voting site, then how am I supposed to feel about the city government's concern over my vote? My right to vote is provided by the U.S. Constitution; my safety to vote should be provided by the city of San Francisco.

Adam Wells
Registered San Francisco Voter

Speedway

Re: "Community Addresses Speed Use" (March 28): You've stirred me up... I didn't attend the forum on "speed," however I found Hakeem Oseni II's coverage very informative and appreciated. That is until I got to the "Recovery Options" part. I found it extremely selfish. What about the people living with AIDS not dying from it and are not in death denial about it? Shouldn't these people be allowed to be free of public screwy? [sic]

"It's a hard thing to watch someone's life go downhill," the article says. So! Be strong, be unselfish. You can do it! I'm tired of do-gooders helping people for self-serving reasons. Leave us alone. Let us self-indulge, we'll be gone soon enough. You seem afraid others will follow and screw with your perfect world.

Doug Sutterfield A.S.S.D.
San Francisco

[The editor responds: Yes. Afraid - and angry.]

Founding editor

B.A.R.'s Silver Anniversary would be incomplete without a tribute to founding editor Paul Lorch. The now-retired City College dean brought us community news spanning the days of the liberation movement into the era of AIDS. To this effort Paul brought and nurtured news and feature reporters who are now legendary.

In editorials that were often full of piss and vinegar, Paul told the truth as he saw it. He became expert in separating fact from fiction. Often he protected us from those who would use the gay and lesbian community for personal, economic or political gain.

Thank you, Paul Lorch. And congratulations and gratitude to all those who have served and who will continue to make this glorious paper the indispensable weekly gay read for generations to come.

Joel Laski
Lloyd Johnson
John G. McCarthy
San Francisco

Raising hope

I just wanted to take a moment to congratulate you and your staff on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the B.A.R. It is very easy for us to take for granted institutions like the *Bay Area Reporter*, however, we at the AIDS Emergency Fund very much appreciate how important your family is to all of us in northern California.

I also want to thank you for making the AIDS Emergency Fund the beneficiary of your anniversary celebration. Your record of generosity and involvement with the Fund over the years is also an example to all of us and we feel very honored that you thought of us when planning your birthday party.

We want to assure you that we will never take your support for granted and will continue to work hard for your respect by always remaining a volunteer-driven organization that is dedicated to serving people with compassion and the lowest overhead possible. Our mission is simple: we raise money to provide emergency financial assistance to low income people with disabling HIV or AIDS who live in northern California. In doing so we offer something much more valuable than cash.

Hope.

I know you join me in the wish that no one we love will ever have to come to the Fund for help, yet, there is real comfort in the knowledge that the AIDS Emergency Fund will always be there when people really need a helping hand.

On behalf of the volunteers, staff and Board of Directors of the AIDS Emergency Fund, thank you for helping us keep that promise alive.

Leslie Ewing
President, Board of Directors
AIDS Emergency Fund

They like us! They really like us!

Congratulations to the B.A.R. and its staff on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary! Special kudos to editor and reporters Mike Salinas, Dennis Conkin, Mary Ann Swisler; general manager Mike Yamashita; design diva Adrian Roberts; cutting-edge culture maven Chris Culwell; political spinmeister Wayne Friday; publisher Bob Ross, and the entire crew of hardworking folks at the B.A.R. who bring us all the news, dirt, poop, and behind-the-scenes scoop every week.

Best wishes for another quarter century.

Robert Bray
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
Media Director
San Francisco Field Office

[Assistant editors Patrick Hoxtel and Roberto Friedman respond: Hmmm. An obvious oversight. Thanks anyway, Robert.]

Pilgrim's progress

People who claim to be preserving "traditional values" by opposing "gay marriages" haven't bothered to do their homework on what the Pilgrim Fathers thought about marriage in general. As Larzer Ziff reminds us in *Puritanism in America*, a typical minister's attitude was, "The celebration of marriage and burial of the dead be no ecclesiastical actions proper to the ministry, but are civil acts, and so to be performed, because those things are such as in the very nature of them belong not to the church alone, but to all people, whether Christians or pagans."

Long before the Constitution was even written, the people who fled here to escape the religious wars of the old world had a profound sense of the need to separate church from state. The alleged "traditional value" of using the state to impose a particular religious view of marriage is one the bigots have just gone out and invented.

David Pini
San Francisco

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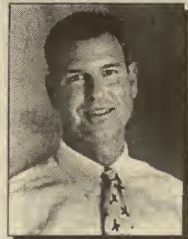
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Who were they?

I attended the Oscar Night Gala at Fort Mason and had a wonderful time. It was truly a very special evening. In the midst of it were two guys who really stood out. The whole place was talking about them.

They were both African-Americans in their mid-twenties. All night long they were either in front of cameras; sipping on Martinis; or prancing around the dance floor. But what stood out more than anything else was their furs!

In a city a little overwrought with political correctness, these cuties showed up in fur. The taller in a Stone Martin fox; the other in a mink that took up his entire shoulder. They looked *fabulous*. I asked one where he got it from; his reply was, "Grandma left it to me in the will!" I saw them as they sped away from the gala in some exotic white convertible sports car!

Great looks, wonderful smiles, a fabulous car, and a sense of humor! Who are these guys - I've just got to know!

Thomas Martin
San Francisco

Hellerstein trials, take two

This is in response to Scott Sproat's letter to the editor ("Trial and error?" March 14). I wish to announce that Scott Sproat needs to catch a clue.

I recently ended a research study with Dr. Hellerstein evolving a new drug called Nandrolone. This was a 21-day in-house project. This study was held at the Presidio of San Francisco conducted by the Western Human Nutrition Research Center.

Dr. Hellerstein is one of the most brilliant men I have ever met, both a seeker of truth and a patient care-provider. While I cannot speak for Andrew Pelfini, who I have never met but spoke to on the phone, he was polite and friendly; I can speak for Becky Hoh. Becky is one of the sweetest women I have ever had the pleasure to meet. Becky is a walking angel on Earth. I would also like to take the time to personally thank Ali, Dr. Hellerstein's assistant, who worked so hard on the study she lost 16 pounds taking care of us. The staff at the W.H.N.R.C. was both sympathetic and compassionate about our well-being.

There are two parts of Scott's letter I do agree with. "They pick and choose the people who they want. It isn't fair!" It isn't fair? When did the development of science need to be fair? They choose who they need based on chemical and blood composition because they have to, not because they want to. I also agree with, "Anyone who decides on getting into a study or trail, beware!" Please think hard about your motivation in participating in a study. Is it just the money? Or is it to benefit your health and humanity in general? Also remember not everyone will go into a study with the same conviction and dedication you might. Participating in a study isn't always a pleasure, but it does have its benefits.

John Caldera
International Mr. Bear 1992
San Francisco

Roof economics

As a longtime volunteer (two years) at Under One Roof, I feel it necessary to respond to the rather uninformed letter written by Kevin P. Murphy.

Mr. Murphy repeatedly compares Under One Roof's efforts with other nonprofits. What he fails to do is compare this retail store with any other retailer. What Mr. Murphy obviously doesn't understand is that retailers must pay for the products that are sold. There is no fairy godmother who descends upon the Castro and delivers thousands of dollars worth of merchandise to all dogooder organizations.

Having worked in retail my entire career, let me shed some light on the subject: after accounting for costs such as goods, salaries, rent, etc., a good retailer might get a profit margin of 10 cents for every one dollar of sales. A great retailer gets a 20%. For Under One Roof, considering the costs of their goods and services, to give back to its AIDS servicers a 63% return on their investment is *amazing*.

How could the store have been able to raise the almost \$3M it has over the last 5 1/2 years if it had depended on donated merchandise, which, for the most part, is not at the level of quality that the discerning Castro shopper is looking for?

Under One Roof is run by volunteer board members, over 150 regular store and office volunteers, and only four paid staff members. Compare that with any other nonprofit. As one of those regular volunteers, and as one of the lucky ones who get to train many of our new volunteers, I'm sure I'm not alone in being offended by the one-sided viewpoint laid out in his letter.

Jonathan S. Plotzker
San Francisco

[The thing is that most people in the community are under the impression that finances at Under One Roof are radically different than they are.

For more on the controversy, read on.]

Hard figures at Under One Roof

In my letter published in the B.A.R. of March 21, I asked Under One Roof's Board of Directors to address the cold hard facts concerning their costs of fundraising. They did, in their annual meeting on March 27th. The facts were terribly depressing, and I take no pleasure in sharing them with your readers. But having opened this can of worms, I feel compelled to be the bearer of bad news.

As best I can determine from the preliminary figures disclosed, Under One Roof raised roughly \$120,000 in private contributions in 1995, and had annual sales of \$950,000 - for a total income of approximately \$1,070,000. Of this total, roughly \$230,000 was raised for the 60 AIDS service organizations that Under One Roof serves. This translates to a cost of fundraising of more than 78%. Which means for every dollar Under One Roof received from the community in 1995, less than 22 cents went to an AIDS service organization.

If you are wondering how this is possible, here are the details as I understood them (and if I am wrong, I hope Under One Roof will correct me.) It cost Under One Roof approximately \$330,000 to operate the store in 1995, and roughly \$330,000 to purchase year-round products. An additional \$163,873 was spent on their Holiday Card Program (which lost \$1,764), and an additional \$50,000 on their Holiday Trim Program (which raised \$40,497.) As stated earlier, roughly \$230,000 went to 60 AIDS service organizations. And I assume that whatever was left over is probably unsold inventory.

I'm sure the numbers will be more exact when Under One Roof releases its final figures in the next month or so. But there were two "hard" figures that I found particularly surprising. First of all, many of your readers may think that Under One Roof sells large volumes of donated goods. It doesn't. In fact, in 1995, they estimated the value of donated goods at \$20,000 (just over 2% of total sales.) And secondly, 41% of all products in the store benefit Under One Roof directly, which means that 60 AIDS service organizations share the remaining 59%. In other words, an average organization benefits from only 1% of all products at Under One Roof.

I wish the news were better. Nevertheless, I am glad to finally have the numbers out in the open. I applaud Under One Roof's leadership for being so candid. And I appreciate that they treated me with respect, despite my criticism. I only wish I could have convinced them that something is seriously wrong when an organization spends 78 cents to raise a dollar. And that "retail is an expensive way to raise money" is simply not an adequate explanation.

As to Under One Roof's future ... that's in the community's hands, not mine. If buyers are willing to support a charitable organization that passes along only 22 cents of every dollar to its beneficiaries - it's their money. If donors, faced with hundreds of compelling causes, still find Under One Roof worthy - it's their decision. If the leaders of 60 AIDS service organizations can convince their constituents that they're not selling their good names awfully cheap - they are truly gifted advocates. And if the hundreds of dedicated volunteers who donated more than 25,000 hours of service to Under One Roof in 1995 are still ready to support the organization - then God bless. You are far more charitable than I am.

As for me, I won't be shopping again at Under One Roof. The need in our community is far too great, and there are dozens of organizations that serve people with AIDS more efficiently. I encourage your readers to support them. Most are included in Under One Roof's list of beneficiaries.

Kevin P. Murphy
San Francisco

Faith healer

History has proven over and over that mankind can not progress until certain issues have been settled. Homosexuality is one of them. The stigma against gays and lesbians is just as ridiculous in our times as the controversy about the Sabbath was for earlier worshippers. Sure there are those who will carry this negative attitude with them to their graves, regardless of how the rest of the world feels about it. And that's okay, because we all will answer to God for our thoughts and actions. So be strong in truth and patient in righteousness. Have faith that God will deliver us all, straight and gay, from ignorance in his own time.

Remember: Christianity is about character, and that alone is what matters to God. And for those who just can't seem to understand that and continually harass and harm you because of who you are, if you must give them a response, tell them, "Beware of what you're thinking and doing when you mess with me, because God shall deal with you at the appointed hour."

Trust God, and family, and take care of yourselves.

Emmanuel G. Martin-Norris
Martinsburg, West Virginia

Please keep letters to the editor short, and include your signature and a contact number. Anonymous or faxed letters will not be considered. Write to: Mailstrom, 395 9th Street, San Francisco, California 94103.

Adios, Angela

by Wayne Friday

Supervisor **Angela Alioto's** loss to **John Burton** in the March 26 state senate primary means that she will be leaving public office at the end of this year, after two terms on this city's Board of Supervisors. Alioto, first elected in 1988, cannot run again due to one of the silliest laws on the books: term limits.

One didn't always have to agree with Angela Alioto (and this columnist sometimes did not) to know that she always had the best of intentions and believed her positions on all issues were for the betterment of this city and its people. Like most public figures, perhaps even more than some, Alioto's occasional off-the-cuff comments and her private life provided fodder for jokes and backbiting by local columnists and gossips, but what the hell — join the club.

In some 20 years of following local politics, I've yet to meet a more dedicated, well-meaning public official than Angela. This woman truly loves this city and cares very much about her fellow San Franciscans. As one who knows most of the political players around here pretty well, I am proud to call the supe my friend, and while she'll soon be off the board, we can rest assured that we'll be seeing more of Angela in the future.

As Ms. Alioto told the *Bay Area Reporter* this week, "There's no question I'll be back. It's only a matter of when." She continued, "I really love this city and the people who live here too much not to stay involved, Wayne." I don't doubt for a second that she means it.

Alioto, employed by her father's law firm, will continue her work as an attorney there. She is also close to completing a book "about my ten years in San Francisco politics."

She declares that she will spend the rest of her time working with friends and political associates in both Washington and Sacramento, "and anywhere else I might be effective," to obtain badly needed funding for HIV rehabilitation, AIDS research, and mental health programs.

During her stint on the Board of Supervisors, Angela has always made the AIDS crisis one of her real causes and been a loyal advocate for the rights of all minorities, especially gays and lesbians. Thanks, Angela, from a grateful community that you have always stood with.

Politics and people

Georgia's Democratic Governor **Zell Miller** signed into law last week a bill to ban same-sex marriages and bar recognition of such a union performed in any other state. Hawaii is hopefully moving toward allowing same-sex marriages, and a marriage in one state usually must be recognized in another, even in the home state of Zell Miller. **Newt Gingrich**, and **Sam Nunn**.

Damn, England is suffering from an outbreak of Mad Cow Disease, while Southern California continues to suffer from an outbreak of Mad Cop Disease. Of course, smuggling illegals into California is wrong and should be



Supervisor Angela Alioto.

dealt with, but the videotape of the "adrenaline-rush caused" violence against two Mexican illegals has to be viewed with utter disgust by any sensible citizen. Experts say that when people get angry (Riverside County deputy sheriffs, for instance), there is a surge from the adrenal glands that causes both mental and physical aggression. So? Murders, rapists, and other criminals often operate under the influence of an adrenaline rush, but they still go to jail, don't they?

California might soon have its first openly gay member in the House of Representatives. **Rick Zbur**, a popular young attorney, won the Democratic nomination in the 38th Congressional District (Long Beach area) and is given a good chance of ousting a first-term conservative GOP congressman in that "swing" district.

In another contest to watch, lesbian nurse **Gerrie Schipske** won the Democratic Assembly nomination in the state's 54th District (south of LA) and could be joining Assemblymembers **Carole Migden** and **Sheila Kuehl** in Sacramento if she knocks off an incumbent Republican. Analysts say this one is definitely up for grabs. (More on the Schipske and Zbur races and how you can help in a couple of weeks.)

Incidentally, some top state GOP operatives are privately saying that **Bob Dole** has already "thrown in the towel" in the battle for California's electoral votes. Seems Dole's campaign people feel that President **Bill Clinton** simply has too big a lead here with too little time for the GOP nominee to turn it around. A big Clinton win in California could very much help Democratic candidates like Rick Zbur.

Bob and **Elizabeth Dole**, vacationing at their Florida condo, were spotted at a hotel gym last week a block from their digs, running side-by-side on treadmills (he for 30 minutes, she for 45). Watched closely by Secret Service

agents, neither Bob nor Elizabeth apparently realized that they were trudging to the beat of the song "Supermodel" by **RuPaul**, the leggy drag-queen disco singer.

Sure, someone else had to come up with the campaign money, but Prop. B's (the new China Basin ballpark) impressive win on primary day was accomplished by putting together the right groups with the proper strategy. Credit must once again go to that ubiquitous man-behind-the-scenes, **Jack Davis**.

San Francisco's favorite singer/comedienne **Sharon McNight** and KOFY-TV magnate **James Gabbert** are the honorary co-chairs of this year's annual AIDS Emergency Fund Awards Dinner at the Marriott (4th and Mission) on Monday, April 22. Cocktails and silent auction at 6 p.m. will be followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$95; call 695-1449 for information. There will be a special performance by Sharon and her band, plus other surprise guest entertainers. The AEF is definitely one of our most effective AIDS organizations and deserves everyone's support. See you at the Marriott!

San Diego's **Nicole Ramirez Murray** (the Lightning Bolt Empress) of *Voices '96* tells me that a huge demonstration of thousands of gays and lesbians from across the country will be held during the GOP National Convention in August in San Diego. For more information, call (619) 692-1967.

A must-read for every political junkie: *We're Right, They're Wrong: A Handbook for Spirited Progressives* by **James Carville** (Random House and Simon & Schuster, \$10).

On a personal note, two of my very favorite people have moved back to San Francisco from their beautiful Tahoe-area ranch. Welcome home, **Kevin Wadsworth** and **Paul Johnson**. Dinner soon?

On yet another personal note, a happy belated b'day to **Reba** of Polk Street's P.S. Saloon on her 65th. Thought I forgot, didn't you? Many, many more to one of my favorite senior citizens! ▼



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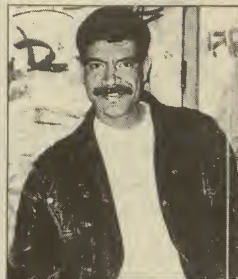
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Heresy and little pink pills

by Beth Elliott

A friend once described how she came to be a DES daughter: When the family doctor prescribed the synthetic estrogen, Mom asked what it was for. "They're little pink pills, Mrs. Brown," he replied. "Just do as you're told!" Unable to get in the loop on the decision process, she gave in. Voila! Another loser in the healthy reproductive tract sweepstakes.



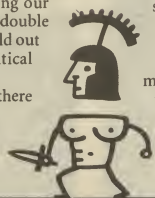
*Louie,
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at thirty-nine
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Love you very much,
Ron*

Years later, women in a number of cities founded women's clinics to put information into our hands so we could make our own decisions about our own bodies. (Happy 25th anniversary, *Our Bodies, Our Selves!*) One might assume, then, we can turn to lesbian health workers and activists for accurate information, and support for making our own choices, without double standards or getting sold out for anybody's political agenda.

Wrong! Sad to say, there is a double standard between gay men and lesbians when it comes to factual evaluation of our respective sexual risks — a double standard enforced by lesbians. Gay men got to analyze the risks of unprotected oral sex and be told it's reasonably safe/an acceptable risk (within certain parameters). Lesbians, though our genital fluids are far less effective vectors and our saliva is just as hostile to HIV, are told: Don't question. Those who dare to conclude oral sex on women might be reasonably safe/an acceptable risk (within similar parameters) are told we're in denial, and — get this — that we believe our lesbian identity protects us from HIV. It's like, "They're little pink squares of latex, Mrs. Brown — just do as you're told!"

Doing fine

I see no reason to insult lesbians' intelligence, especially since we seem to be doing just fine with negotiating healthy sex on our own terms, despite our lesbian HIV "experts." Fluid bonding, dipping hands in bowls of lemon or vinegar solution to check for



Sapphistication

nicks and cuts, talking about sexual histories before being sexually intimate, varying sexual practices depending on time of month and vaginal health — these are strategies of women skeptical of lesbian AIDS envy but hip to the old Arab proverb: "Trust in Allah but tie up your camel."

We can easily agree with mandatory prophylaxes at sex clubs and play parties, and pack latex in case a night at the club ends in a stranger's bed, without buying into the latest version of the lesbian vapors. One could reject a loser who seems stupid enough to have had unprotected sex with a man or injected drugs, but I'm sure someone would object to that strategy as elitist or something.

But this isn't enough for the experts, who apparently bought that late '80s jive that if lesbian sex isn't as dangerous as sex involving semen, then it couldn't be real sex. No, they expect nothing less than absolute faith in the notion that woman-to-woman sex transmits

HIV — even though that, girls, is bad science.

First, there is a reason for the CDC's hierarchy of exposure: some acts and bodily fluids are more dangerous than others, and the female-to-female stuff is way down on the list. Second, even taking into account the potential masking effect of that hierarchy, the CDC says woman-to-woman transmission hasn't been proven and isn't likely, though they can't rule it out as a possibility. Being sexual with confidence while hedging one's bets — the popular strategy — thus seems the intelligent and appropriate thing to do.

Shaky grounds

Still, the "experts" (those with jobs at stake?) talk about the CDC like conservative Republicans talk about Whitewater and how Bill

male-female cases by saying in ten years lesbian positive numbers would be as high as gay men's. I didn't buy it.)

Or maybe they're just that caught up in being part of a macabre happening thing — we know women have lied about being HIV-positive to get attention and government grants. And I recall seeing a woman whose death was trotted out as proof that lesbians get AIDS — with the implication we get it from sex with women — going on *Donahue* when she was first infected and admitting friends had shot her up at a party with a contaminated needle.

Someone complained recently about lesbians saying, "That's not me, that's not my issue," when it came to women who have sex with women but have other risk factors; she said we need to "rede-

We can easily agree with mandatory prophylaxes at sex clubs and play parties, and pack latex in case a night at the club ends in a stranger's bed, without buying into the latest version of the lesbian vapors.

and Hillary must have killed Vince Foster — on equally shaky grounds. The CDC's published papers now show a sensitivity to lesbian concerns (including use of the terminology WSW, or women who have sex with women). But while our "experts" think the scientists are evil, they treat lesbian skeptics of their HIV PC like morons.

Take this business of saying anyone who thinks lesbian sex is low risk must be relying on her identity to protect her. That's like saying lesbians who sleep with men think they don't need birth control. Maybe it happens — I wouldn't know. But since this is their standard reply to anyone's embarrassing questions about sexual transmission based on what we do instead of who we are, I suspect they're shining us on, and that's pretty sleazy.

(I first got shined on in May 1984 by Holly Smith, who deflected my question about proven fe-

fine the geography of lesbianism" to include all women who have sex with other women. Presumably she means we should make their infection a lesbian community issue even if it resulted from sex with men — in which case she shouldn't hold her breath. I think a lot of women will perceive this as saying any woman who's ever dabbled in sex with women has an entitlement to lesbian community resources for heterosexually derived health problems.

This is why many lesbians breach the great taboo against asking how HIV-positive lesbians got infected. While sex with men and IV drug use are things many lesbians do, they're not specifically lesbian practices. (I can't believe I have to explain this.)

Lesbians identify our issues as whether and how our sexuality may be affected by the epidemic; the taboo punishes us for asking questions instead of just taking our little pink pills. ▼

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Idiot Savant

by Al Kielwasser

Despite the hackneyed "Ask Marilyn" title of her column, Marilyn vos Savant claims a certain distinction from the pack. According to her publisher, Savant "is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records Hall of Fame for 'Highest IQ.'" Each week, she offers "thoughtful, occasionally unconventional" answers to questions posed by the readers of *Parade* magazine — who send Savant more than 35,000 letters a year.

Parade's March 31 issue features an "expanded edition" of Savant's column and, as part of a promotion for her new book, includes her on the cover as well. The headline promises Savant will not only tackle "a probability question involving two pairs of shoes," but also answer the questions "Has the existence of God been proved mathematically?" and "Is homosexuality a choice?"

Actually, Savant tackles two questions on the origins of homosexuality. One reader asks for help in settling a domestic dispute; her husband "thinks homosexuality is a choice," but she feels "it is something over which gay people have no control, similar to being right- or left-handed." Another reader writes: "Do you think homosexuality has a genetic origin, or is it a choice of behavior? If you answer my question, please sign me anonymous. I accept my sexual orientation, and my family tries to accept, but they would be embarrassed."

Savant's single answer to both questions runs ten paragraphs long. Several times, she attempts to dispel intolerance and affirm that "gay people are just as good as the rest of us." However, she also offers a series of dismissive,

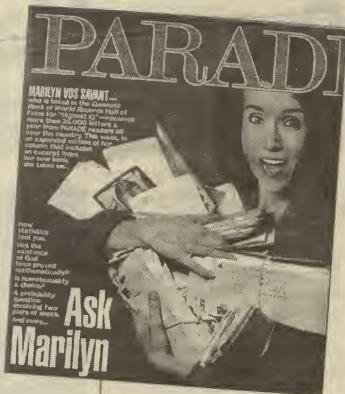
capricious — and frankly bizarre — opinions, which seriously undermine the effort.

Savant begins by announcing why — at last — she decided to answer this question, which readers "have been asking ... for years." Previously, she "resisted the temptation to reply" because the "subject has become political." "The subject is clearly a matter of science, not politics," says Savant; she'll answer these two questions, since they "don't address the issue of rights."

Following this awkward buildup, Savant pontificates the obvious: "It appears to me our reasoning is going astray, because we're operating on a hidden assumption — that all gay behavior comes from a single source. Maybe it doesn't."

Savant quickly moves from the obvious into gross obscurity, however, as she lays out her own theory of "true" vs. "apparent" homosexuality. "True homosexuals" are "born that way," she reasons, and their homosexuality is biologically (if not genetically) determined. "Apparent homosexuals," by contrast, "are not born that way but ... develop gay behavior as a result of external influences." "In neither case do I think it is a matter of choice (except for a few people who just enjoy being different, which we find in any kind of behavior group)," she says.

Savant further explains that "true homosexuals" may be neurotic, though only "because of the miserable way they're so often treated." "But gay people shouldn't need to wait for the approbation of straight people," she notes,



"and that's one reason they're agitating for change."

As for the "apparent homosexuals," Savant says, most of them are neurotic. She adds: "This group is largely responsible for giving all gay people a reputation they don't deserve. Sometimes I wish the true homosexuals — who are just as serious, responsible and productive as the rest of us — would distance themselves from

page 12 ►

The Galleon Bar & Grill

Dear Customers and Friends:

April 11, 1996

We are writing this letter to personally let you, our friends and customers, know what is happening at the Galleon and how it will affect you. We are happy to announce that the Galleon has solved all of its problems of the past. As you may have noticed, we have acquired some new staff and are taking a new look and name.

On April 15, 1996, the Galleon will close for much deserved remodeling. The Monday night pasta feed, held by the Imperial Council and the Galleon, will continue to be held here. So do come down on Monday, April 15th and the 22nd and 29th, these will not be affected by the remodeling effort.

The bar of the Galleon will reopen its doors on Friday, April 19, 1996. Be very careful and please excuse our mess while remodeling is taking place. Don't tell anyone else how the remodeling is looking, make them see for themselves. The bar will be running lots of drink specials and, of course, your favorites like Polk Street Sally (Dixon), Tommy, Brian, Stephanie and a few new faces will be behind the bar, serving your favorite drinks and spreading the latest gossip. Free hors d'oeuvres will be served on most days.

The restaurant will reopen on May 8, 1996. We will keep you informed, if those nasty contractors don't keep their schedule. May 8th will be the first day of our grand remodeling opening and will take place over 5 days, ending on Sunday May 12th. This will be by invitation only, if you would like an invitation, just complete a mailing list registration form from your waiter or bartender and you will be contacted by mail or telephone.

Friday night cabaret with Larry O'Leno behind the piano, will continue during the remodeling. Starting Friday, May 12, 1996 Barry Kinder will join the entertainment spot with Larry every Friday night. So drop by and see who of their many multi-talented friends also come by to entertain you. Saturday night, of course, with Larry O'Leno will continue, so don't run away David Seamans.

The new name of the Galleon will be The Galleon Quarter Deck and, as you may have guessed, the remodeling will take on this theme.



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Penney Magrane gets landmark appointment

by Mary Ann Swissler

In the space of a few years San Francisco lesbian Penney Magrane has gone from being a "gourmet dyke" with little interest or stake in gay politics, to working to get the Castro District named a historical landmark.

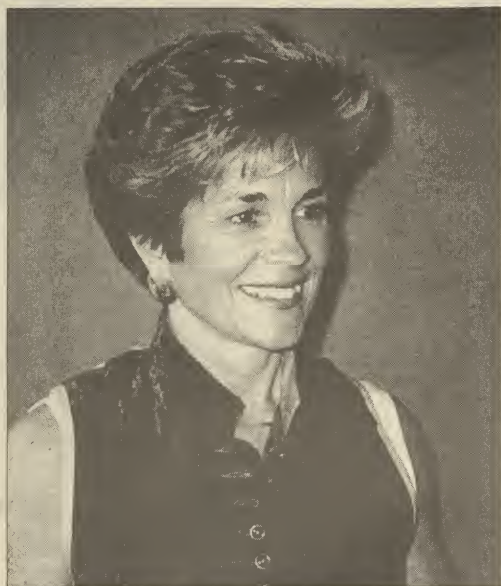
Magrane was recently appointed to the Landmark Preservation and Advisory Board, where one order of business might (and that's a big might) be to convince the locals and the state government to register the Castro District on the National Register of Historical Places.

Other issues that will be brought before the commission, which serves as an advisory board to the planning commission, will include expanding playgrounds for kids in the Tenderloin district at the Civic Center Plaza, as well as new construction and development around the city.

Magrane moved to San Francisco in 1972, and came out as a lesbian seven years later. She said that although she has never felt personally discriminated against, she realizes it is important to get involved in the community.

This is her first appointment to any commission, she said.

"I have for years been a 'gourmet dyke,'" she told the B.A.R., meaning "a dyke who has



Dr. Joan Howley

Penney Magrane: "I have for years been a 'gourmet dyke.'"

a very comfortable life sitting with her dyke peers... many fine hours drinking wine and having wonderful dinners" and leaving their political protection to others.

Not so any more. The 48-year-old landscape company owner said before she was appointed she was not even aware of the commission's existence. But now, after attending a few meetings and studying up on its functions, she said, "I am awed by the fact that [the commission] is so extensive and primary in making decisions relating to the architectural and historical preservation of the city."

And in addition to that work,

she is also on the Human Rights Campaign's board of governors, co-convenor of the local HRC steering committee, and the annual dinner co-chair of the 1994 and 1995 HRC fundraising dinners. The San Francisco dinner was recognized by the HRC headquarters in Washington for increasing the number of women involved; Magrane said the number of women at last year's dinner was 429, up from 129.

The next HRC fundraising dinner is scheduled for June 15, and is expected to draw at least 1,700 people, including many children. ▼

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GLAAD

◀ page 11

the bad actors and nut cases."

Savant concludes her "opinion" with a critical flourish. She dismisses the handedness metaphor, rejects the concept of "sexual orientation," and denies the very existence of "homophobia."

Unlike the fingers on left- and right-handed people, Savant argues, the sex organs of heterosexuals and homosexuals actually "function" differently. Her point, it seems, is that heterosexuals tend to reproduce. She will not use the term "sexual orientation" because it "implies that homosexuality and heterosexuality are merely insignificant variations of sexual behavior. ... That attitude takes reproduction far too lightly," says Savant.

As for homophobia, she declares: "I also don't think that heterosexual people are afraid of homosexual people at all. ... Targeting homophobia as a problem wastes precious time and energy that could be directed at more fundamental problems—like simple intolerance."

Clearly — and despite any record-breaking IQ — Savant has not grounded her beliefs in the research literature on homosexuality or homophobia. Though she would deny the interplay of poli-

tics and science, her naive positivism cannot mask the ideology of Savant's own writing. Her "unconventional opinions" exhibit a fairly conventional bias.

Well-meaning heterosexuals often act as if they are literally "entitled to an opinion" about homosexuals; heterosexuality is almost never subject to such speculative free-for-alls. Homosexuality is singled out — time and again — as the problem to be solved or thing to be explained (as if heterosexuality made perfect sense).

In Savant's "solution," there is no distinction between "heterosexual" and "normal." Gay people are "perfectly fine" and "worthy of respect" not because — but when — they are "just as serious, responsible, and productive as the rest of us." Anyone who is not "just as good as us" — that is, anyone who is not apparently heterosexual — is a "nut case."

This heterosexism is perhaps most blatant in Savant's claim that, since homophobes do not exist, combating homophobia is a waste of time ... a distraction from "more fundamental problems." Of course, homophobic bigotry is not simply an expression of fear, but hate. The climate of violence, abuse, and discrimination that surrounds lesbian and gay people cannot be understood — or effectively challenged — as

next page ▶

Gay police officer Chuck Limbert A thin lavender line

by Dennis Conkin

Openly gay San Francisco police officer Chuck Limbert, who is active in straight and gay law enforcement groups, says that he's always wanted to be a cop, but it wasn't until he came to San Francisco—and came out of the closet—that he could realize his dreams.

"I came to San Francisco on a vacation five years ago and found something that I'd always searched for, and that was acceptance," said Limbert, a former hospital administrator.

"I decided I didn't want to do hospital administration work anymore. I wanted to experience who I am," he grinned.

Born and raised in Chicago, Limbert said that despite the obvious differences, there are similarities between the two seemingly disparate professions.

"A lot of hospital administration is crisis management. I find that to be similar to police work. It's just staying calm and using common sense with people's problems and helping them find solutions to their problems," he said.

Limbert decided to apply for the job after being approached by a gay police officer who was conducting street outreach.

"I was walking down the street and they were leafletting for careers in law enforcement. It was a gentleman who passed away about three years ago. His name was Mark. He was a very handsome man," he recalled.

So Limbert filled out an interest card, without much of a second thought.

"I always wanted to be a police officer, but thought I couldn't because of my sexuality. That I wouldn't be accepted. But I turned in the interest card and took the tests, and I did well. Really very well.

"It was a time for me and a time to prove who I was," he said.

Limbert said initial concerns that he couldn't compete with the younger officers or keep up dur-

ing rigorous Police Academy training quickly faded.

And he said the day he received his police badge as an openly gay officer is one of the proudest of his life.

"I was ostracized from my family, which is Chicago Irish

spit at me. That was really hard. But law enforcement is a precarious profession, in this society. Especially in gay society. But we need to change that opinion of the police department.

"And that's only going to come from more education, more role

community and political involvement is an attempt to build bridges between the diverse groups which make up the lesbian and gay community. He's particularly concerned about the fate of lesbian and gay youth, and promised the Golden State Peace Officers Association will begin to take a leadership role in working with youth-serving agencies.

"I want to focus our attention much more directly on the youth of the community. They are so important to our future as a society, and if they are not educated and well-grounded and don't have self-esteem or role models, they are going to have problems as they grow older," he said.

"We have to invest in our future," Limbert said. ▽



Officer Chuck Limbert: "I always wanted to be a police officer, but thought I couldn't because of my sexuality."

Catholic, but I got tired of hiding and feeling guilty," he said.

Limbert acknowledged that more lesbians seem to be seeking careers in law enforcement than gay men.

"I think it's more acceptable for a lesbian to be in the department than a man. I think it's a cultural thing and that gay men need to know that it's okay to be aggressive, and that if they want to go into the department, they have a lot of options open to them," he said.

Precarious profession

According to Limbert, some members of the community don't understand why a gay man or lesbian would want to be in law enforcement.

And, he added, rancor about the infamous October 6, 1989 police sweep of the Castro remains.

"I have been in line at a demonstration and had a friend

models and police involvement with the community," he said.

Limbert is vice president of the Golden State Peace Officers Association, a lesbian and gay officers group, as well as treasurer of the San Francisco Police Officers Association union.

He said that much of his com-

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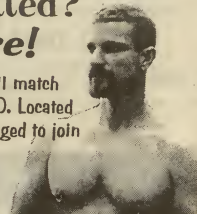
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"simple intolerance."

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Send questions (or, better yet, answers) for Marilyn vos Savant to: Ask Marilyn, *Parade*, 711 Third Avenue, New York NY 10017; copy your concerns to Walter Anderson, Editor, *Parade*, at the same address. Savant's new book, *The Power of Logical Thinking*, is published by St. Martin's Press.

Web watch

[1] ACT UP New York has announced its "entry to the Web," with a site that features ACT UP history, current actions, and links to other chapters in the U.S. and Paris (<http://www.actupny.org>).

[2] The North Carolina Gay & Lesbian Attorneys (NC-GALA) have put the full text of their "Legal Guide" online, "for use by gays and lesbians who have general questions on legal matters" (<http://members.aol.com/nc->

[gala/](http://www.gala/)).

[3] The April issue of *Oasis* — "the Internet's only monthly resource for queer and questioning youth" — carries a cover story on Tyson Meade (lead singer of the Chainsaw Kittens), a profile of Kelli Peterson (high school senior and founder of Utah's banned "Gay-Straight Alliance"), and a wide range of youth commentary on everything from gay proms to coming out online (<http://www.outproud.org/oasis/>).

[4] Footage.net is an online news archive, featuring video clips and transcripts of TV and radio news broadcasts, from the beginning of the century to the present (<http://www.footage.net>).

To report any defamatory or affirmative media coverage, call the 24-hour "MediaAlert Hotline" (415-861-4588), or write to: Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, 1360 Mission Street, Suite 200, San Francisco CA 94103, tel. 415-861-2244, fax 415-861-4893, e-mail glaadsfba@aol.com, URL <http://www.ccnet.com/gaytrek/glaad.html>.

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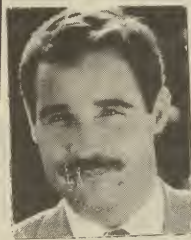
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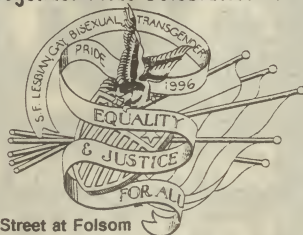
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Fourth Circuit Court backs 'Don't Ask'

by Bob Roehr

Don't Ask, Don't Tell" was upheld by the highest court to date, the Fourth Circuit sitting in Richmond, Virginia. In *Thomasson v. Perry*, released April 5, the 9-4 majority cited "separation of powers" in accepting as constitutional the "new" ban against gays in the military.

Lt. Paul G. Thomasson, a pilot of ten years' service, was dismissed from the Navy when he wrote his commanders a letter saying, "I am gay." His legal challenge to that policy has sped its way through lower courts and seems likely headed for the U.S. Supreme Court next fall.

The majority decision, written by Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson III, called the policy "a carefully crafted national political compromise" by the executive and legislative branches of government. "Such products of the democratic process are seldom completely tidy or universally satisfactory, but it is precisely on that account that they deserve judicial respect."

"The courts were not created to award by judicial decree what was not achievable by political consensus... To overturn those solutions in the absence of a clear constitutional mandate would transform the judiciary into an instrument of disenfranchisement for all who use the political process to register the democratic will."

A central issue in oral arguments was whether or not Thomasson's statement carried with it the "presumption" that he would commit homosexual acts, and whether or not he had "rebutted" that presumption.

Wilkinson called the presumption "logical." He wrote, "It is also legitimate for the government to seek to forestall these same dangers (to unit cohesion) by trying to prevent the commission of such acts."

He looked at Thomasson's refusal to rebut the presumption, and the Navy's offering of no other evidence that Thomasson



Lt. Paul G. Thomasson suffered a reversal in his challenge to the ban against gays in the military.

engaged in prohibited conduct, and concluded that the Lieutenant "did not demonstrate that he lacked a propensity to engage in homosexual acts." Thus the Judge turned on its head the presumption of innocence until proven guilty.

He dismissed the First Amendment challenge to freedom of speech "because the statute aims at this propensity, not at speech, it is not a viewpoint-based or content-based regulation." Thus, since the purpose of the Act was the only thing that mattered, secondary impact could, in effect, be ignored.

Regulations illegal

Six members of the majority argued that the regulations written by the Pentagon to implement the Act of Congress were themselves illegal because they allow some homosexuals to continue to serve in the military in "what is in effect a sanctuary for known homosexuals."

They would "simply invali-

date" the regulations "as in excess of statutory authority." It is a position argued by the archconservative Family Research Council in their amicus brief to the case.

The opinion, written by Judge J. Michael Luttig, said: "That regulation redefines the statutory terms 'propensity' so that only those homosexual service members who are likely to engage in homosexual acts will be discharged. Through this regulation the Administration has effectively secured the very policy regarding military service by homosexuals it was denied by the Congress." He strongly and repeatedly chastised the Administration for its "deliberateness of the mischaracterization" of the policy.

Luttig muddled the water further by calling the policy "a hybrid of status and conduct, namely 'propensity,' which he defined as 'different from a predetermined and immutable characteristic like race or sex.'"

What he seemed to be saying

page 20 ►

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Hallowed ground: Nearly 100 volunteers celebrated Earth Day 1992 by planting trees in the Grove.

Pelosi wants AIDS Memorial Grove to be national monument

Business Wire

Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi introduced legislation Thursday, March 28 to designate San Francisco's AIDS Memorial Grove a national monument.

The AMG, a 15-acre wooden basin located in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, is the nation's first living memorial to the hundreds of thousands of Americans who have died of AIDS, as well as a retreat for those living with HIV and their loved ones.

"The AIDS Memorial Grove is a center for remembrance, hope, and renewal for people throughout the nation," said Pelosi. "This legislation recognizes the significance of the Grove for those whose lives have been affected by HIV or AIDS. I commend all of the members of the Grove board, the staff, and the volunteers who have worked so hard to make it a success."

The Grove was conceived in 1989 and development began in 1991, and a 99-year renewable agreement was signed with the



Rep. Nancy Pelosi.

City of San Francisco and the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department to maintain it in perpetuity. It is totally supported by private donations, and receives no government financial assistance.

The Grove is governed by a board of directors and administered by a full-time staff, and is a project of the Tides Center, a non-profit corporation dedicated to social justice and stewardship of the natural environment. In order to promote it as a place of healing, hope and remembrance, hundreds of volunteers continue to

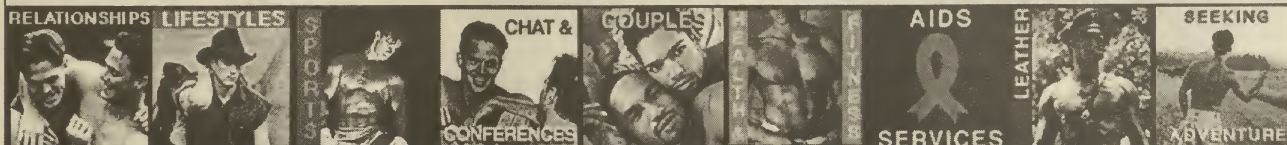
assist with monthly restoration efforts and design scheduled for completion in late 1997.

The design of the Grove was donated by prestigious landscape architects who continue to volunteer their time. The recent corporate underwriting provided by the Gap Foundation demonstrates the growing support of national corporations.

"As an industry and a company devastated by this disease, we are pleased to be the lead corporate gift to The AIDS Memorial Grove, helping to establish a national place for healing and remembrance," said Molly White, executive director of the Gap Foundation.

The Circle of Friends, a flagstone circle of over 2,000 names of people touched by the AIDS crisis, will be added to the Grove this spring in order to raise \$2 million to endow its perpetual care. Space for names is still available, for a tax deductible donation of \$1,000 per individual name. One million dollars has been raised thus far, toward a \$2 million goal for construction and landscape renovations of the site. ▼

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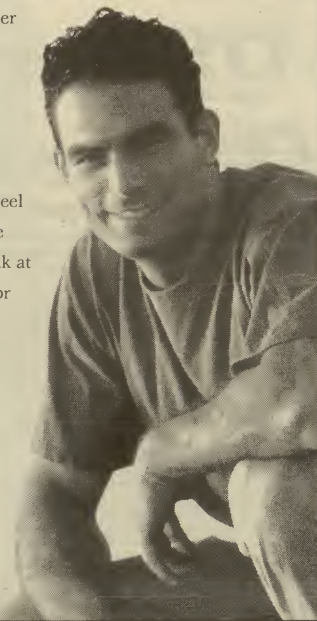
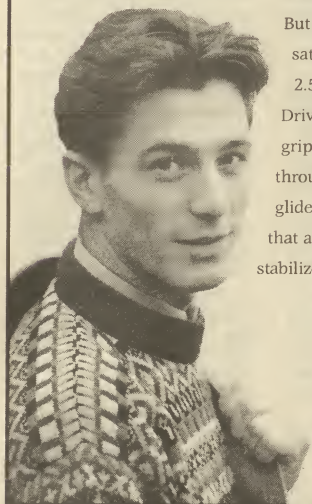
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Kaiser promises updated HIV/AIDS care

by Mary Ann Swissler

Significant progress has been reported by AIDS activists and Supervisor Tom Ammiano's office on the issue of HIV/AIDS patient care at San Francisco Kaiser Permanente facilities.

After new meetings, Kaiser has agreed to update its HIV care guidelines by May of this year and name a physician as HIV Medical Services Director, according to a March 21 letter from Dr. Phil Madvig, Physician-In-Chief at Kaiser.

"Generically what they're saying is that they are committed to a true collaboration and partnership with the community," said Ammiano aide Mike Housh.

Even ACT UP/Golden Gate spokesman Bill Thorne expressed hope that AIDS activists and Kaiser may yet come to some agreement, after rancorous meetings early this year and a February 1 public hearing where supervisors threatened to drop city contracts with Kaiser unless better care was provided to HIV/AIDS patients.

"What they promised to do was viral load testing, and also to include human growth hormone in the treatment of wasting syndrome," Thorne told the B.A.R. According to Madvig's March 21 letter, a 400-patient viral load study will focus exclusively on Kaiser San Francisco patients.

Thorne also said that a Kaiser AIDS clinic is a possibility in the future, as is a list of HIV-sensitive and -trained physicians. He also noted that Kaiser has already added all protease inhibitors, that HIV training for physicians has already begun, and that human



Some patients have termed HIV/AIDS care at Kaiser "a crapshoot."

growth hormone will be made available for AIDS-related wasting for patients who don't respond to thalidomide.

Kaiser spokespersons have maintained throughout the controversy that the criticisms have been excessive, unfair, and demoralizing to the staff of physicians and nurses who work hard to treat people with HIV and AIDS. Kaiser representative Jeff Jackson emphasized to the B.A.R. that the giant HMO has had standards of care for HIV/AIDS patients in place since 1988, bolstered by an HIV Member Advisory Panel.

But Ammiano and many HIV/AIDS patients complained that there are no universal standards of treatment, making med-

ical care at Kaiser a crapshoot.

ACT UP/Golden Gate and the People With AIDS Coalition recently were allowed to appoint their own members to Kaiser's HIV Member Advisory Panel. Both groups are "cautiously optimistic," according to Thorne, and will revisit the issue with Kaiser at Ammiano's office sometime in May.

"The proof will be in the pudding," he said. ▼

Copies of the proposed guidelines will be available at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, Community Consortium, PWAC and ACT UP/Golden Gate. A community forum will be held to solicit public comments.

Americans want smarter AIDS policies

by Susan Milius, UPI
Science Writer

A survey released Tuesday, March 26 suggests support for so-called "controversial" AIDS prevention measures may run wider and deeper in the United States than previously thought.

The Kaiser Family Foundation, based in Menlo Park, California, questioned 1,511 people about AIDS prevention measures, knowledge of the disease, and needs for teaching children about AIDS.

"What we found most surprising and most interesting was the wide support," said the foundation's Mollyann Brodie.

Sixty-six percent of all Americans — including 56 percent of Republicans, 67 percent of Catholics, and 62 percent of people following evangelical faiths — favor giving clean needles to IV drug-users, said the results.

Seventy-one percent want to see network TV carrying condom ads, according to the survey. That block of supporters includes 65 percent of Republicans, 76 percent of Catholics, and 62 percent of evangelical respondents.

Least comfortable group with the idea were senior citizens, and 52 percent of them favor network condom ads.

References to condoms in movies and TV shows, providing

little boosts for the safe-sex message, have substantial support too. The Kaiser survey found 63 percent of Americans in favor, including 56 percent of Republicans, 69 percent of Catholics, and 54 percent of the evangelical respondents.

Ninety-five percent of Americans believe that high schools should teach students about AIDS, and 69 percent want the lessons to start no later than age 12, said the survey.

That block includes 93 percent of Republicans, 95 percent of Catholics, and 92 percent of evangelical Americans.

"Where the controversy exists is how far the schools should go," Brodie said, and the biggest split seemed to be between generations. While 46 percent of Americans as a whole favor making condoms available in schools, only 29 percent of senior citizens like the idea.

However, 63 percent of senior citizens aged 65 or older favored AIDS-related education in schools as long as it does not involve providing condoms. ▼

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Henry Foster and birth control pill inventor to speak in San Francisco

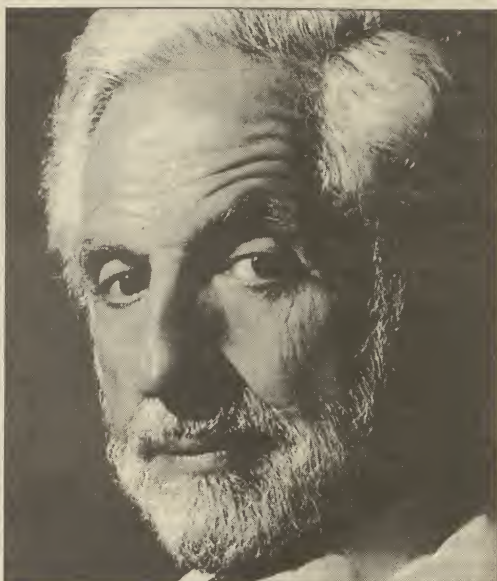
by Mary Ann Swissler

Stanford University professor Dr. Carl Djerassi, whose creation of the birth control pill changed the face of fertility worldwide, will join former U.S. Surgeon General-nominee Dr. Henry Foster as featured speakers at Planned Parenthood Golden Gate's annual dinner on Thursday, April 18.

"Building Bridges to the Future" will be held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in San Francisco, beginning with a reception scheduled for 6:30 p.m. and followed by dinner at 8 p.m. Tickets are on sale for \$175 and up. All proceeds benefit Planned Parenthood Golden Gate, comprising Planned Parenthood affiliates in San Francisco, Alameda, San Mateo, Marin, Sonoma, and Mendocino counties.

Dubbed "the father of the birth control pill," Djerassi received the National Medal of Science in 1973 for the first synthesis of a steroid oral contraceptive in 1951, and is currently a writer and chemistry professor at Stanford University. He is also founder of the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, an artists' colony near Woodside, California, which offers residences and studios for artists, writers, musicians, and choreographers.

Foster was President Clinton's nominee for surgeon general, and the director of the national "I



Dr. Carl Djerassi: "I feel there are too many natural parents...where the parenting is done so poorly."

Have a Future" program to help prevent unwanted teen pregnancies. He will speak about the future of healthcare delivery. ▼

For ticket information call (415) 574-5823.

Dr. Carl Djerassi on lesbian and gay parenting

by Mary Ann Swissler

The inventor of the oral contraceptive, Carl Djerassi, recently spoke to the B.A.R. from his Russian Hill penthouse home which he shares with his wife, a feminist studies professor at Stanford University. Djerassi spoke of the normalcy of lesbian and gay parenthood. In his opinion, it is bad parenting that should be viewed as the anomaly.

Predictably, as a scientist who spent a career trying to stop unfettered fertility rather than encourage it, Djerassi often found himself cast in the same moral universe in which gays and lesbians are placed. Today, although he is retired from research for more than a decade, he still calls for an emphasis on quality parenting, rather than on the gender of the parent or parents. His would be a welcome voice in today's family planning environment.

"I feel there are too many natural parents—traditional father and a traditional mother—where the parenting is done so poorly. More frequently it's done poorly by the man.

"If I were in charge of adopting agencies or something like that, I would look at the quality of the parents" or of one parent. "I myself would have no objection if it were two men or two women," said Djerassi.

He believes that insecurity lies at the root of homophobia. "If I were a happily married, heterosexual couple, why would I be concerned whether there was another happily married homosexual couple?"

"It's much more than a threat to the view of the traditional family structure, which is made up of the man and the woman. I would say possibly it is even that there is a threat that [gays] will turn out to be good parents, or possibly even better parents, and that would be a major reflection on the traditional marriage pattern."

Djerassi has also turned his creative efforts to writing fiction and has four novels to his credit, one of which, *Bourbaki's Gambit*, features a lesbian scientist. ▼

Djerassi can be reached on his Web Page at <http://www.djerassi.com>.

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Motherlode of HIV found

by Scott K. Veggeberg,
United Press International

In a finding that could refocus AIDS research, researchers have stumbled upon what they believe to be the elusive place in the body where HIV thrives in the years between infection and the onset of AIDS.

The researchers discovered this motherlode of HIV while examining an intriguing set of adenoids — the spongy lymph glands at the back of the throat — taken from 13 people who did not seem to be afflicted with the usual sorts of viruses or cancer that would explain the swelling.

What they found was astonishing. Certain immune cells in the adenoids, called dendritic cells, were literally bursting with HIV.

"They're little factories pumping out an awful lot of virus," said pathologist Sarah Frankel of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Washington, one of the researchers on the study. "They are really, really hot." Even more astounding was the fact that none of the people were sick with AIDS. In fact, 11 of them didn't even know they were HIV-positive.

"It's not a cure, of course, but

this is the first time we've seen viral replication so decisively," said Ralph Steinman of Rockefeller University in New York, another scientist involved in the discovery. "It's 15 years into the epidemic and we'd never seen it before."

The dendritic cells are a rarity, found mostly in the mucus membranes that line the mouth, throat, nose, uterus, and other tissues. They're the couriers, not the soldiers, in the immune response. They pick up bits of protein from invading viruses and then search for T cells that will react to the foreign proteins by mounting a full-scale attack.

Giant cells

The HIV-infected dendritic

cells had actually fused together with scores of T cells to form what are called "giant cells." Such giant cells are commonly found in infections, and apparently it's the fusion process that is critical in HIV proliferation, he said.

"Each cell may contribute something the virus wants," he said, "and by having it together, it amplifies the virus's replication."

This latest finding should give a tremendous boost to efforts to cure the disease or develop a vaccine, said Steinman. For one thing, it tells vaccine researchers to shift their efforts from making T cells more aggressive, and look instead at ways of getting the dendritic cells to sound a stronger and clearer alarm to the T cells. ▼

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Circuit Court

◀ page 14

was that it is okay to discriminate on the basis of certain chosen actions such as homosexuality but not on others such as religion. Yet implicit in his logic is that if science proves biologic causation for even some homosexuality, then the Act must fall as discriminatory.

Dissent

Four members of the Court vehemently disagreed with the majority in a decision penned by Judge Kenneth K. Hall. He acknowledged deference to the other two branches of govern-

ment but pointed as well to "our duty to defend the Constitution against the trespasses of those branches, no matter how carefully or pedantically they be constructed, and notwithstanding their popularity. The Founders gave us lifetime tenure to assure that we would not shrink from that duty."

"We have a role — a vital one — in ensuring that the military remain submissive to the Constitution and civil authority," wrote Hall. "While I will defer, as I ought and must, to the professional judgment of military commanders on things military, I may never defer to their judgment on things constitutional."

He focused upon the facts of the case before them, Lt. Thomasson, "a real homosexual, a real unit, and hence a real test of the 'unit cohesion' hypothesis." And he concluded that the presence of this particular acknowledged homosexual was not a threat to that unit cohesion.

"The actual experience in

defend the United States rather than tolerate him in their midst. There is not proof of any of these hypothesis in the record, and there is abundant disproof."

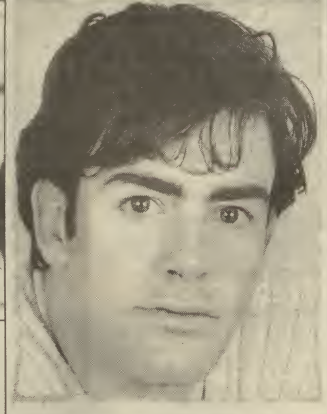
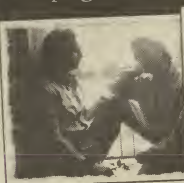
Reactions

Thomasson reacted with disappointment but not surprise. "Some day the ideal of equal justice under law will be a reality in America for gays and lesbians. That day may not come tomorrow, but it will come," he said.

He has 90 days in which to appeal the case to the U.S. Supreme Court. During that time he and his attorney will likely consult with others involved with challenges to "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" in the Second and Ninth Circuits.

Kirk Childress, staff attorney with the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, noted that "a majority of the Court, when you count those in the Luttig concurrence and the four who dissented, recognized that this policy does not do what the Administration

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"We have a vital role in ensuring that the military remain submissive to the Constitution and civil authority. While I may defer to the professional judgment of commanders on things military, I may never defer to their judgment on things constitutional."

—Judge Kenneth K. Hall, in dissent.

Thomasson's unit should not surprise us. The ability of the American soldier to put duty before prejudice has been tested before.

"Unit cohesion" is a facile way for the ins to put a patina of rationality on their efforts to exclude the outs."

Hall called the policy unconstitutional in its "presumption that everyone will fail to comply with rules of conduct... A presumption of misconduct from a person's status, or even from his private prejudices, does not comport with due process... In America, we presume that individuals obey the rules until they prove otherwise."

He concluded: "Lt. Paul Thomasson's career is over because it is presumed that he will misbehave in a manner that is assumed to incite the prejudices of his colleagues, whom it is speculated will abandon their duties to

says it does." It is not a change from the old policy.

He found it interesting that the majority "goes into such detail about deference to the military," yet six of them in them "would impose their own judgment on the military" by expelling all homosexuals when the military has said it has no problem with closeted ones.

Matt Coles is director of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Lesbian and Gay Rights Project and a lead attorney in the Able case now before the Second Circuit.

"Constitutional protections are not determined by popular vote," he said in criticizing the majority decision. "If the government passes a law for no reason but to coddle the perceived fears of heterosexual troops, then a court applying the Constitution should strike it down." ▼

Volberding studies approach 'in contrast to antiviral drugs'

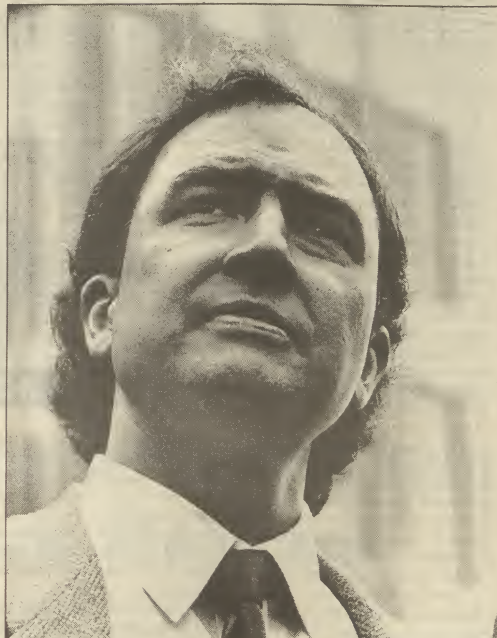
PRNewswire

Cell Genesys, Inc. announced Tuesday, April 2 that it has filed an Investigational New Drug application (IND) with the Food and Drug Administration for a second human clinical trial of the company's gene therapy for AIDS.

The trial will test the company's commercial approach to this therapy, in which a patient's own T cells will be collected, genetically modified to recognize and destroy HIV-infected cells, and returned to that same patient as AIDS gene therapy.

Subject to FDA approval, Drs. Steven Deeks and Paul Volberding, clinical investigators at the University of California, San Francisco and San Francisco General Hospital, and Drs. Elizabeth Connick and Robert Schooley, clinical investigators with the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, will carry out the clinical trial in a two-center Phase II trial. The trial is designed to evaluate the efficacy of a combination of gene therapy and antiviral drugs for AIDS.

The second trial follows an initial proof-of-principle trial of AIDS gene therapy being conducted by Drs. Robert Walker and H. Clifford Lane at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. This trial, which is now at the Phase II stage of testing, involves a population of identical twins in which gene-modified cells derived from a healthy twin are used to treat an identical twin with HIV infection. Preliminary results were reported in January



Dr. Paul Volberding: "Cell Genesys' AIDS gene therapy uses immune cells to target and destroy the HIV-infected cells."

1996 for the Phase I portion of this study, indicating no treatment-related safety problems and good persistence of the gene modified cells. Preliminary efficacy results from both the ongoing study in twins and new study of individualized gene therapy could be available before the end of this

year.

"Cell Genesys' AIDS gene therapy is one of the more exciting new approaches to the potential treatment of this life-threatening disease we have had the opportunity to evaluate," said Schooley. "This gene therapy could potentially be used in combination with

multiple antiviral drugs, even the best of which will not cure this disease." Schooley, who is Professor of Medicine at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, currently chairs the AIDS Clinical Trial Group (ACTG), a nationwide consortium of more than 35 AIDS Treatment Centers sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. He has conducted clinical trials and AIDS research for over 15 years.

"In contrast to the antiviral drugs, all of which target the virus, Cell Genesys' AIDS gene therapy uses immune cells to tar-

get and destroy the HIV-infected cells," said Dr. Volberding, who is Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, and heads the AIDS and Oncology Division at San Francisco General Hospital and has directed numerous clinical trials for potential AIDS therapies during the last 15 years. "This approach could potentially restore at least part of the immune function destroyed by HIV in AIDS patients."

The Foster City, California company's AIDS gene therapy is being developed through a worldwide collaboration with Hoechst Marion Roussel. ▼

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Performing our own narratives

by Hakeem Oseni II

The "Love Like This Theatre" of the Asian AIDS Project is conducting a series of the atre and acting workshops beginning Monday, April 15 at 6:30 p.m.

The free workshops are designed to stimulate creativity and create an atmosphere of sharing, caring and discussion of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Asian Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS issues. They will be held twice a week (Mondays and Thursdays) at the Asian AIDS Project Office at 785 Market Street, Suite 420.

The culmination of these efforts will be a performance showcase and a stage production in June 1996. For more information contact Louie Pascasio at (415) 227-1592.

Window on the world

This year's Visibility Campaign Award will be given to Sandip Roy, editor of *Trikone* newsletter. The award given by San Francisco's Living Well Project is in

recognition of continuing work within the lesbian, gay, and bisexual Asian and Pacific Islander communities, and for willingness to be visible.

When Sandip Roy was a teenager in Calcutta, the *Trikone* newsletter was his "window to the world I knew existed somewhere."

In 1992 Roy began his ongoing volunteer editorship. The newsletter is now a quarterly, co-gendered magazine, and has been integral to the rise of South Asian gay, lesbian and bisexual visibility.

"It always goes back to my time in India. I just wanted to give back to a magazine that was so important to me," he said. The award will be given Wednesday, April 17 at 6 p.m. in a ceremony at 401 Van Ness Avenue. Call (415) 575-3939 for more information.

Title II Consortium looks for new members

The Ryan White HIV Care consortium is looking for new members who wish to get involved in issues affecting the

HIV/AIDS community. The Title II Care Consortium is reaching out especially to members of the affected community.

For further information please contact Kathy Kessler at (510) 873-6522.

International gay men unite

Gay men all over the world can now find vacation accommodations at no cost by browsing through the forthcoming International Gay Penpals summer newsletter, which will list over 700 contacts in more than 40 countries. The listings will include the U.S., India, Russia, Cuba, Egypt, Thailand, Japan, Germany, England, Australia, France, Italy and several other countries.

Other than free vacation accommodations, benefits from corresponding with gay men all over the world include language practices, photo and cultural exchange, jobs tips and even romance.

Men with HIV/AIDS can join for half price, no proof of status required. For more information send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: IGP, STE 320, Box 7304, North Hollywood CA 91603. ▼



AIDS File

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Are you HIV POSITIVE with SEVERE DIARRHEA?

Volunteers sought for a 3 month clinical trial to study the efficacy of albendazole, a new investigational drug, in the symptomatic treatment of severe diarrhea caused by intestinal microsporidiosis.

Volunteers who participate in the study will be compensated for trial-related expenses.

If you have more than 3 liquid bowel movements a day for at least 2 weeks you may be eligible for this study. For further information, please call:

Richard Cazen, MD
Davies Medical Center
415-565-6288

or
Lisa T., Research Assistant
San Francisco General Hospital
415-206-4746

An ADAP crisis again? Enough already!

by Edward Zold, ACT UP/
Golden Gate Writers' Pool

Two weeks ago, we reported in this column the crisis facing California's AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) and ADAPs nationwide. At the time of publication, we were anxiously awaiting a decision from the state Department of Finance on a request for augmentation that would give the program funding to cover its deficit (approximately \$4 million) and add epivir (3TC) to ADAP formulary. As of April 5, we are still waiting. Meanwhile, the state Assembly and Senate are reportedly planning hearings on tightening eligibility criteria for the program. The news, however, is not all bad.

This latest (and most alarming) in a series of inexcusable management errors has been the proverbial "last straw" for activists who have watched this comedy of errors for years. The good news is that those activists, advocates, and ADAP enrollees now agree that it is time to make some major changes to the program.

Finding funding

Adding drugs to the ADAP formulary has always been a difficult task. This time around, it has been excruciating. Top priority has been covering the program's

deficit (\$4 million) to insure that many counties are not forced to shut down completely before the end of the state fiscal year. The need to find additional funds for the addition of the protease drugs and epivir left the state Office of AIDS (OA) no choice but to attach this request to their request for augmentation — bringing the total to \$7.9 million.

It would be difficult for any state office or department to explain why such a need was not foreseen at the beginning of the fiscal year. Additionally, OA, which has a big chunk of federal money to plan for and evaluate this program, has had a lot of explaining to do. It's taking a while, too, for the necessary people in the state bureaucracy to buy the excuses that OA is concocting. The viability of this augmentation request has been so uncertain that without the work of AIDS advocates, the addition of these drugs would be nothing but a pipe dream.

In California, LIFE Lobby, ACT UP/Golden Gate, Project Inform, AIDS Project Los Angeles, San Francisco AIDS Foundation and others have together identified several viable plans to add epivir and protease inhibitors this year and cover the deficit.

Results of community efforts are impressive. Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi and her aide, Dr. Steve Morin, after meeting with several AIDS advocates, were instrumental in getting a \$52 million augmentation to ADAP programs nationwide from Congress. Meanwhile, California officials have "felt our pain" as letters, phone calls, and faxes have offered the same advice over and over: cover the deficit and add the drugs!

Community-based AIDS organizations have successfully intervened, while the state bureaucracy has yet to deliver anything. Most community-based advocates know the difference between access to the standard of care and no access: life or death. This motivation is reflected in quick results, unlike the state bureaucracy that has pursued half-measures at a leisurely pace.

Who is more able?

OA's failure to effectively conduct planning, evaluation, and administrative duties is what some activists believe to be the cause of this crisis. There was no plan, there had been little evaluation done, and basic administrative tasks had not been done. Community organizations took on many of these tasks. As a result, we now have a cost projection based on an evaluation of

current and future need for ADAP and reasonable estimates on other program statistics.

The performance of community-based organizations in contrast to DA's dismal record on ADAP begs the question: who is more able to manage ADAP?

In prevention and many care programs, the introduction of community planning, oversight, and management created radical change. Programs once forced to meet ill-conceived, rigid goals have in many cases been replaced by innovative, dynamic programs centered around the needs of at-risk or infected individuals.

Local success stories include a multi-service substance abuse/mental health/HIV prevention agency (18th St. Services/Operation Concern), an agency that provides case management to any person with HIV/AIDS in San Francisco (San Francisco AIDS Foundation) and a multi-service, comprehensive program serving high risk and HIV-positive youth (Larkin Street Youth Services & Cole St. Clinic). These are some of the complex programs that serve as a lifeline to many of us. Federal funds are allocated to them by community planning groups, based on our city's needs and their success in meeting needs with services.

Unlike state and federal bureaucracies, community-planned services are funded through contractual agreements that set performance standards and allow for the termination of contracts with agencies failing to meet their responsibilities. Federal, state, and local health agencies and government contractors make technical assistance and support services available to enable agencies to fulfill their obligations.

Need and priorities are evaluated every year before any funds are committed (zero-based budgeting). The result has been a more calculated, quick response to changes in community need. Few government systems, state or federal, are agile or informed enough to operate in such a manner. Organizations in communities across the country have proven that community-based planning and management is among the most effective service delivery models. It may therefore be time to apply this model to ADAP and take it out of the hands of its negligent guardian. Ironically, AIDS advocates are demanding for ADAP what Republican leaders are demanding for many programs: community control over funds instead of government

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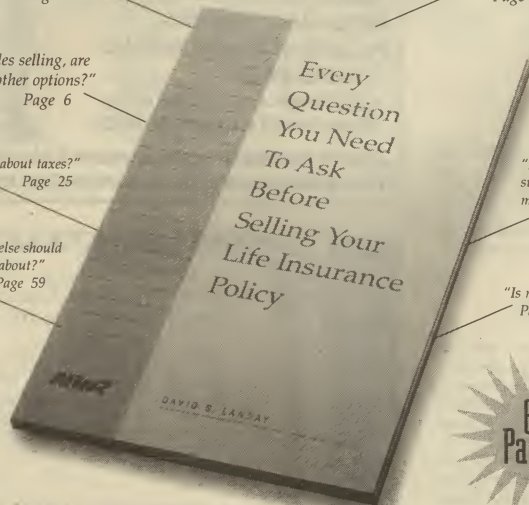
"Besides selling, are there other options?"
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"What about taxes?"
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ACTION UPDATE

Killing time is killing people!

Stop the madness! State officials are still withholding treatment from PWAs while they try to sort through the mess that they have made of ADAP.

Call Governor Pete Wilson: (916) 445-1114; or Craig Brown, director, Department of Finance: (916) 445-4141. Let them know that you are tired of people with AIDS being punished for the carelessness of state employees! Insist that they reform ADAP immediately or turn it over to a competent and concerned entity.

Easter eats



Assisted by Andrew O'Halloran, A.L. Allen serves Jim K. (left) and Doug White at Tenderloin Tessie's annual Easter dinner at the First Unitarian Church. Rumor has it that the sweet potatoes were especially good this year.

Program offers extra help to PWAs on Medicare

by Thomas P. McCormack

Newly-announced 1996 income eligibility levels can mean an extra \$42.50 monthly in Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) checks and extra medical benefits for PWAs who have survived the two-year wait for Medicare.

PWAs with SSDI and other income under \$794 monthly will see the \$42.50 Medicare Part B premium that's being deducted restored to their checks, once the Specified Low Income Medicare Beneficiary (SLIMB) begins paying it for them.

Those with SSDI and other income under \$665 per month will not only get the premium paid for them and have the \$42.50 restored to their SSDI checks – but the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) program will also pay the \$736 hospital admission deductible, the \$100 annual doctor bill deductible, and the 20% of doctor and outpatient bills that Medicare doesn't cover.

Both SLIMB and QMB are run by state Medicaid programs through local welfare offices – not Social Security offices – even though they involve federal Medicare benefits. To be eligible for both SLIMB and QMB, one can have assets up to \$4,000, an automobile, and a lived-in home of any value. An additional \$1,500 in savings is permitted if it's kept separately from other money and the applicant plans to use it for burial.

Applications are taken at local welfare offices – not at Social Security branches. Those applying should bring birth certificates, bank account and other asset records, deeds, mortgages, auto registrations, and driver's licenses or other proof of identity and residency. Most importantly, applicants need to show their Medicare cards and the latest letter from Social Security stating their SSDI benefit total. (Call 800-772-1213 for a new one if you've lost this letter.)

In computing eligibility, it's the total SSDI amount that counts against the \$794 and \$645 income levels. SSDI checks only show the

net amount – after the \$42.50 has been deducted. So, in computing total income, one must add the \$42.50 Medicare Part B deduction back onto the net SSDI check amount.

Applying for SLIMB or QMB at the welfare office now can mean a \$42.50 increase in an SSDI check for those who qualify – and coverage of Medicare deductibles and co-payments as well for those who get the more generous QMB coverage.

Where else to go

Medicare, QMB, or SLIMB won't help with prescription drugs or care outside the Medicare benefit package. Medicaid does so – for those who are eligible. Those applying for QMB or SLIMB at welfare offices in California, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Florida, Maine, New Jersey, and Rhode Island should remember that Medicaid levels there are as high as – or almost as high as – the QMB levels. So it would pay to ask for "full" Medicaid (called MediCal in California) as well while applying for QMB or SLIMB.

Those who can't qualify for Medicaid might be eligible for their state's AIDS Drug Assistance (ADAP) program, which has much higher income limits. Call (800) 432-AIDS to find out how to contact the state's ADAP program. But if PWAs can't get the coverage or the drugs they need from Medicaid or ADAP – and they live in Connecticut, Illinois, Maine, Maryland or New Jersey – there are state general drug assistance programs, which also use income levels higher than Medicaid's. (These states' general drug programs are separate from ADAP; they're for all needy disabled people and pre-date the AIDS crisis.) Call the city or county aging office (even if you're not elderly) to get details about these separate drug programs in these five states.

For those not covered by any of these programs, the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association (202-835-3400) and the Senate Aging committee (202-224-5364) have lists of free drug programs run by the industry, and

patients' doctors can order free prescriptions for those who have no other way to pay. ▼

Thomas McCormack is the author of *The AIDS Benefit Handbook*.

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OBITUARY POLICY

Obituaries must be typed and no longer than 200 words. Please follow normal rules of capitalization – and no poetry. We reserve the right to edit for style, clarity, grammar, and taste.

If you're submitting a photo of the deceased, write their name on the back. If you include a SASE for the photo's return, write the person's name on the inside of the envelope flap. All obituaries must include a contact name and phone number.

Deadline for all obituaries is Monday at 5 p.m.

Thomas Joseph Lynch

Aug. 27, 1919 – March 12, 1996



Pneumonia and congestive heart disease and several years battling cancer, emphysema and diabetes ended Tom's life during the night at PMC without pain or suffering. He was 76.

Tom was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army in 1943 on disability. He fought in the front lines, of which he rarely spoke. He had an early and later career in the theatre. His moment of fame came during his run in the original *Boys From Syracuse*. Later he worked in the Russian Tea Room reading palms and tea leaves. That was followed by his certification in massage and physical therapy.

Tom is survived by his sister, Marita Lynch, and a host of friends across the country. He was preceded in death by his parents, William and Bridgette, and brothers, Edward and William.

A memorial Mass will be said in the chapel inside Ft. Mason (Bay and Franklin Gate), Monday, April 15, at 7:30 p.m. Contributions to the AIDS Emergency Fund, SF AIDS Foundation or LYRIC would be appreciated. His ashes will be scattered at a later date. For further information, contact Shelby at 563-2147 (voice mail) with full name and number for return call.

Gerald Fife

1943 – 1996

Gerry died on February 19. A graduate of the University of Michigan, he



worked as a writer in Delaware before moving West. In Los Angeles he was a radio reporter for KSWO. In San Francisco he edited the house organ for Crocker Bank before beginning to

work for the University of San Francisco. His friends will miss his mordant wit and acidic comments. He was so great at telling a story that friends often pressured him to resume his writing career. He always responded that he was not a writer but a raconteur.

Gerry will be missed by Michael Meehan, Bob Mazique, Doris Andruz, Ilsa Trexler, Evelyn, Leo and Steve Sokolsky, Mona Kepler, Kay McGill and Bruce Crane. Family members who will also miss him are Kelly Fife Montgomery, Patricia McMillian, Cynthia Hampton, Faye Legett, Leola and Larry Hatwood, and Linda McKinney.

His ashes and those of his brother, Kenny, will soon be scattered into the Bay, as were the ashes of their sister, Dr. Marilyn Fife. It is with great sadness that this writer realizes that he will have disposed of the remains of a whole generation of the Fife family into San Francisco Bay.

Frank J. Gotti

Nov. 4, 1958 – March 31, 1996



Frank, 37, entered into eternal rest peacefully at his residence on Palm Sunday due to AIDS complications. Born in Vineland, New Jersey, he moved at age four with his family to Hayward, Calif., where he was raised.

Frank began a bartending career in Hayward, where he was better known as "Dago." His great sense of humor and one-liners kept the bar stools occupied.

Frank moved back to the East Coast, where he made South Philly his home. He was the general manager of the Cartwheel in New Hope, Penn. His health forced him to leave in December 1995.

With a tear in his eye and a smile on his face, Frank died with his soulmate, Michael De Cero; his mother; sister; and a longtime friend, Manny, at his side. He is survived by Michael; mother, Eleanor; daughter, Urci; brothers, Nick and Dean; sisters, Debbie and Doreen; two nieces; two nephews; and many loving

relatives and friends.

A memorial service will be held April 11 at the Chapel of the Chimes in Hayward, Calif., at 3 p.m. Memorial contributions can be made to the In Memory Foundation of the East Bay. Contact Val Souza at (510) 482-3577.

Roger D. Pielae

Dec. 10, 1948 – March 17, 1996



Gentle and loving Roger has left us after a 10-year struggle with HIV. He was liked and loved by everyone he met or worked with and will be especially missed by his life partner, James, and the

"mother" he adopted, Bea. His sly sense of humor is already missed by those of us who knew when he was teasing.

Roger came from Oregon for college and stayed in San Francisco, where he found home. He had many interests and abilities, which led to his many different careers. In his early days here, he was a wedding photographer, later the owner of a printing/copy store called Paper Depot, and most recently the maintenance engineer for George Lithograph. Roger's hobby of collecting things eventually led to a part-time occupation selling his artifacts at the flea market. But he usually came home with more than he sold. His final successful years were due in part to his friends and programs at N.A.

Roger went to his angels while holding the hand of his sister, Nell. He is also survived by his sister, Marilyn, and his brother, Perry, as well as the many nieces and nephews he adored.

Tom Alan French

March 26, 1996



Tom Alan French gave up his long and courageous battle with AIDS on March 26. His final days were spent surrounded by his loving family and caring friends in the Sonoma Valley home of his devoted mother, Denise.

A celebration of Tom's life was held on March 31 in the home of his sister, Donna, and her husband, Dan Buscovitch. Tom's sister, Karen; her husband, Hart Ayles; another sister, Sharon French-Martinez; and his extended family were in attendance.

Tom, you will be greatly missed in our lives yet remembered fondly in our hearts...always.

William (Bill) McCulloch

Dec. 17, 1943 – March 9, 1996



On March 9 the earth lost a piece of its heart and soul. Bill McCulloch passed away, leaving behind a soulmate, family and a host of friends. Bill was 53, a Sagittarian and a sage, whose wisdom we

turned to often. Now we are looking around at one another in disbelief at our loss.

Bill was a strong individual and a believer and practitioner of equal rights for all. None of us ever knew a more unbigoted person. His friends were a diverse group of people made up of different nationalities, colors, religions and sexual orientations. He had traveled widely and knew people in many lands. They were the spokes, and Bill was the hub of this circle of friends.

Yet he was a competitor and would fight when necessary. This was how he achieved what he did professionally, in sports as a basketball player, in entertainment as a singer, and as a human being. He was strong, and his friends drew from his strength. None of us will ever forget his strength and courage in his battle with AIDS.

We miss him terribly.

Eric Miles Tofson

Jan. 14, 1966 – March 5, 1996



Eric was taken from us unexpectedly the evening of March 5, due to a car accident near his home in Hanford, Calif. He was a very special person to everyone

Matthew Paul Shankle

January 10, 1961-April 3, 1996



Matthew Shankle died at home of complications from AIDS surrounded and held by family and loved ones. He is survived by his life companion and friend, Jeff McLaughlin; his daughter, Marisa McLaughlin; sisters, Joanne Rice and Ellen Smalley; brothers, Henry and Robert Shankle; father, Henry Shankle; by many other relatives, in-laws, and friends from San Francisco and beyond; and of course, his cat, Johnny.

Matthew was born in Delano, California, lived as a child and teenager in Arroyo Grande, and attended college at Cal Poly-SLO where he majored in ornamental horticulture. He moved to San Francisco in 1984 to live with his partner, Jeff. During his years in San Francisco he worked first at Crown Books, and then in July, 1993, at PO Plus.

Matt's favorite activity was gardening, and there are many homes in San Francisco made far more beautiful by his efforts and hard work. Long after he went on disability in July, 1993, Matt continued to garden. He looked forward to it each day, and if there is any one thing responsible for keeping him alive, it was his gardens. In addition to gardening, Matt enjoyed needlepoint, pottery, traveling around the world with Jeff, listening to country-western music, and countless hours dancing at the Rawhide II.

His family thanks all those who befriended, helped and loved Matt, especially after July, 1993. Matt asked that special thanks be given to his best friend since high school, Kevin Vermilion; his hospice nurse, Nancy Franzen; his friend, Michael Jarvis; his friend and minister, Rev. Jim Mitulski, Pastor at MCC; his Shanti support volunteer, Neill Oreagain; and friends Hector Medina, Ricardo Martinez, Bil Blades, Kent Hansen, and Olive Blades. All of you were there when Matt needed you most.

A remembrance and celebration of Matt's life will be held on Saturday, May 11, 1996 at 2:00pm at Metropolitan Community Church of San Francisco. In lieu of flowers, Matt asked that you consider making a donation in his name to The AIDS Memorial Grove, MCC of San Francisco, or Project Open Hand. For more information, please call Jeff McLaughlin at [415] 626 3482.

Rest in peace and enjoy your garden, Matthew. Know that you are loved and missed greatly each day I remain behind. Be patient, Matthew. Where you are now, I too will be someday. Wait for me until we are together again. Jeff

OBITUARIES

who knew him. He had a unique gift of making a friend where ever he went. He was a special friend to many people, and was always there for you in both good and bad times.

Eric was known to transform on many a Halloween night into his favorite country singer, Reba McEntire, thus earning him the nickname "Reba." He was well-known in Walnut Creek and made many friends while working at DJ's. He moved to Hanford in the fall of 1993 to attend school to be a cosmetologist.

Eric is survived by his parents, Robert and Sandra Tofson of Hanford; a sister, Carolyn Nichols of Rohnert Park; and his special friends, Bryan Wolfe, Joe Jenkins and John North; as well as many other good friends.

A memorial remembrance party will be held in Eric's honor on April 13 at DJ's in Walnut Creek from 3 to 5 p.m. His parents are requesting memorial donations in his name be made to the Polly Klass Foundation.

Edward Neil Eisenberger

Oct. 23, 1961 - April 5, 1996



Neil was a native of Manheim, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He came to San Francisco in the early '80s. He graduated from the California Culinary Academy and worked briefly in a local hotel. His

diagnosis with HIV ended his dream of a lifetime career as a chef. Yet he was to survive more than 12 years, eventually enduring some of the most devastating symptoms that virus can inflict.

Neil made many friends in San Francisco who will miss that delightful smile. He leaves some of them behind, but he also joins a number of his good friends who are part of his welcoming committee in that life where there is no virus, no pain, no sorrow.

Neil is survived by his mother, Dawn Eisenberger; his sister and brother-in-law, Sheri and Randy Ferrari; their two boys, Anthony and Vince, nephews he loved dearly, all of Manheim; his father, Edward; and a large and loving family of aunts and uncles.

Funeral arrangements are pending at Salem United Methodist Church in Manheim. Neil's family asks that you support the AIDS organization of your choice in lieu of flowers. For an address to notify the family, call Rob at 928-7558.

George Richard Stevens

Oct. 31, 1953 - April 3, 1996



Rick was stubborn, most who knew him would agree. But some very positive characteristics come forth from people like that. Like being a fighter, persevering to the finish on what he started -

life, for example. And loyalty. Rick was a loyal man, to his lover, to his family, to friends and to his Church. Whether or not he always agreed with what they said or did, he was loyal. Thank you for that gift, Rick.

He fought for years the complications of HIV. When the time came to move on, he very gently left his body behind minutes after a quiet conversation with his caregivers.

With his lover of 14 years, Robert Wortman, Rick founded Buddha Farms, marketing Native American herbs. In addition to Robert, he is survived by his father, Les Stevens of Martinez, and his sister, Susan Palmeri of Concord. He leaves many friends in the valley, the East Bay and San Francisco.

Memorial services were held at St. Francis Episcopal Church in Turlock on Holy Saturday, April 6.

May he rest in peace.

Jesse James Moore

Feb. 28, 1967 - March 12, 1996



Each friend represents a world with in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it's only by this meeting that a new world is made.

Jesse James Moore died peacefully in his sleep on March 12 from AIDS-related complications. To mourn his death and celebrate his life, he leaves his mother, Clara Moore; sister, Bonnie; brother, Jonathan, all of New Haven, Conn.;

close friends, Stephen Spencer and Michael Windt; and many friends in the Bay Area and in New York. Our thanks to the doctors and staff at UCSF Mount Zion Medical Center, Cole Street clinic, Visiting Nurses, and many volunteers and projects that assisted Jesse throughout his illness.

A requiem Mass of the resurrection to celebrate Jesse's life will be held on Saturday, April 13, at 3 p.m. at Church of the Advent, 261 Fell Street (at Gough), San Francisco. Donations can be made in Jesse's memory to the Native American AIDS Project.

Richard Craig Corville

Nov. 14, 1949 - April 2, 1996



Richard's spirit left his earthly body on April 2 to dance in lighter realms, following complications from AIDS. We will miss your sharp wit, Richard, your quick energy and your master gardener's knowledge of roses and growing things.

Richard leaves behind his loving partner, Tom Sheppard; his dear parents, Craig and Eleanor Corville; his loving sister, Carol Horn; and other loving family.

Richard, as you always said, "Stars awake to brave new worlds." Until we all dance together in the light of brave new worlds, may the blessings be.

Friends are invited to niche-side ser-

vices April 13 at 1 p.m. at Cypress Lawn Memorial Park, 1370 El Camino, Colma, CA (415) 755-0580. Donations in Richard's memory preferred to Project Open Hand, 2720 17th St., SF, CA 94110, or your favorite charity.

Gregory Joseph Brown

June 15, 1954 - March 22, 1996



On Friday, March 22, our son, brother and friend departed this world for the "back bar at Mary's" in the sky. Known for his keen wit, charming smile and his ability to find humor in every situation,

Greg truly lived each day to the fullest. Born and raised in Alameda, Calif., Greg graduated from Alameda High in 1972. In the fall of 1982, he hopped a plane to Hawaii, never looking back. He soundly embraced the "Spirit of Aloha," showering friends with love and kindness.

Greg would be the first to recognize the silver lining of his situation: AIDS brought many compassionate people into his life. He grew fond of the staffs at both Queen's and Kuakini Medical Centers, as well as the people of the Life Foundation who assisted him over the years.

His ashes were scattered off the shores of Waikiki on Easter Sunday following a memorial celebration. He is survived by his mother, Irene; brother,

David; best friend, William "Billy" Pedro; and many dear friends.

While Greg is sorely missed by us all, we know he is where Hawaiian music endlessly echoes and the "Vodka 7's" are free flowing - Ching! Ching! Aloha 'oe Greg...until we meet again.

Community life in the B.A.R.

JOEL SWANDBY



8/22/1953 • 4/6/1996

On Saturday, April 6, 1996, Joel Kenneth Swandby, my best friend, lover of over 18 years and the most handsome traveling companion I will ever have, died of complications due to AIDS. Joel lived an open, rich, and honest life.

His greatest gift was that he never judged anyone, embracing everyone he met and every situation as an opportunity to learn and experience something new. Joel respected the thoughts and ideas of others but was not shy in articulating and debating his own views. He embraced all of the performing and visual arts with a passion. And he brought a unique and witty energy to all of his professional and social endeavors. His light will be missed, but those whose paths he crossed will hold and cherish his memory.

In addition to myself, Lonnie Payne, Joel is survived by his mother, Ethel Swandby, brother and sister-in-law, Mark and Toni Swandby, and nieces, Melanie, Pauline, Tina and Maria. Joel also leaves a legion of old and dear friends. The family would like to express a very personal thank you to Lisa his doctor and Ann his nurse. A celebration of his life will be held Sunday, April 14, 1996, 2:00pm at the home of Wally Bowman and Gregg Stratton. Please call 415-621-6460 if you will be attending and need the address. Memorials can be made to the AIDS Emergency Fund.

GERARD "JERRY" ZICK

May 10, 1935-April 13, 1995



Dearest Jerry,

"Where do you start?

A year gone by! Memories...

How do you separate the present from the past?
How do you deal with all the things you thought would last?
That didn't last!

with bits of memory scattered here and there

I look around and don't know where...to start
Which books are yours?
Which tapes and dreams belong to you and which are mine?
Our lives are tangled like the branches of a vine that intertwine.

So many habits that will have to break
and yesterdays will have to take...apart.
One day there'll be a song or something in the air again
to catch me by surprise... and you'll be there again

A moment in

what might have been.

"Where do you start?

Do you allow yourself a little time to cry?

Or do you close your eyes and kiss it all goodbye?

I guess you try.

And though I don't know where and don't know when

I'll find myself in love again

I promise there will always be
a little place no one will see
a tiny part deep in my heart
that stays in love with you."

Always my love, Bob Atria

Gary A. Schmidt

"JOSHUA"



May 29, 1963-March 28, 1996

A seeker of life, love and adventure, Gary was born in Bismarck, ND, and lived in Germany, Boston, San Francisco, Monte Rio, and Santa Rosa. In his adult life he used the name Joshua. Joshua's charismatic nature drew many people into his life. He embraced life with open arms and great enthusiasm. His positive energy and great warrior spirit were inspiring and often contagious. In his battle with HIV and AIDS, combining Eastern and Western philosophies, he was a student and teacher to those around him. While living in S.F. he worked as a nurse on the AIDS unit at David's medical center. He also shared his talents using reflexology, guided imagery, therapeutic touch and sound therapy to bring healing to those around him. He worked hard in the community volunteering time at many AIDS organizations including the Center for Living, Face to Face, Food for Thought, Pets are Loving Support, and the HIV Complementary Therapy Center in Santa Rosa.

Joshua saw his HIV status as a double-edged sword. The disease that eventually took his life also brought blessings and taught him many valuable life lessons. HIV created an opening for him to live consciously and die consciously. This beautiful person and loving spirit who embraced life to the end embraced death with the same courage and grace.

Joshua is survived by his parents Vince and Regina Schmidt, his sisters Colleen, Debbie, Mary and Sandy of Bismarck ND, his partner Keith Holmes and close friends Corey Mees and Paul Candler of San Francisco, and many other friends and family.

Thank you Joshua for allowing us to be a part of your wonderful adventure and for being a shining example of unconditional love. We are all blessed to have shared your life with you and we will carry you in our hearts forever.

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The Unabom-Queer

by Michael C. Botkin

It was a pleasant night, and the restaurant was crowded and a bit noisy. Not so noisy, however, that the conversation between two men at a central table didn't attract attention. "I tell you, the Unabomber, Theodore John Kaczynski, is queer. It's obvious if you read between the lines."

This produced a sudden silence of the usual restaurant noise as diners froze with their forks in the air. A little polite eavesdropping is always pursued without malice, but this tidbit clearly commanded greater attention.

The partner of the guy doing the outing, a thirtysomething blond, attempted to challenge his hypothesis. "Look, you said that Michael Jackson was queer."

"And is he ever!"
"And then you said that Magic Johnson was queer."
"Very much so."

"And finally you said that DuPont, the rich guy who blew away a wrestler, was gay. It really looks like everybody is queer to you."

"I'm willing to stake my life on the queerness of Jackson, Johnson and DuPont. I'll grant you, however, that the Unabomber's case is a lot harder to figure out. You have to carefully examine the few details the press has given."

"This should be interesting. Please ... go ahead and enlighten me."

"We know he was precocious. He graduated from high school a year early and from Harvard also a year early. Then he went to graduate school and got a Ph.D. in math in just five years - and believe me, getting a math Ph.D. in five years from Ann Arbor is quite an accomplishment."

"Well, yes, but it's not a particularly gay accomplishment."
"It's not a dead giveaway, but

it is suggestive. How many gay students are brilliant but withdrawn? But I agree that it's not conclusive by itself. The real giveaway comes after he got his degrees. He became a teacher at Berkeley, an extraordinarily young one. But after a couple of years, he quit and soon started bombing."

"And what, pray tell, does this reveal?"

"That the Unabomber discovered he was gay and couldn't deal with it. He became a closet case, and his reign of terror was the result!"

Decisive factor

"Consider: most of his victims were male. All three of the people he killed were male. And he seemed to have a focus on teachers - people who held the same position he once held. This was because he knew, presumably from experience, that these teachers had excellent opportunities for seducing students."

The blond was shaking his head. "I just don't see it. From what we can tell from the papers he was a loner and probably asexual."

"Aha! Yes! But why was he a loner and asexual? It was because he was locking up his gayness."

"But he just doesn't sound gay. He went around dressed like a street person, and neighbors said he was a nice guy but he smelled really bad. How many queers do you know who fit that description?"

"Plenty, actually. If you spent a little less time at Castro sweater bars and more time in the Tenderloin, you would, too."

"Okay, assuming you have something here, why haven't the papers picked up on it?"

"They know about it and are doing their utmost to conceal it. Just like with DuPont, where the *New York Times* printed several thousands of words on the case

and only mentioned once, very unnoticeable, that he'd been sued by a wrestling coach for sexual harassment. The attention or lack thereof from the press cannot be considered a very decisive factor in cases like this."

"It sounds to me like nothing can be considered a very decisive factor in cases like this," his companion muttered, turning his attention back to his plate. He slurped down a forkful of pasta and then asked, "So,

what are you going to do? Call a press conference, organize a protest, set up a picket at FBI headquarters?"

Dark zone

"That's a good question. I don't want to jump into the middle of the media circus that's al-

ready going on about this. Maybe I'll make up a simple flier and distribute it anonymously, just so that people have some access to the truth."

At this point a woman at a neighboring table leaned over and broke in, "If you really want to do that, I can get you a few hundred free copies made."

"You'll what!" complained her tablemate. "You don't actually believe that crap, do you?"

"I don't know if I do or not, but it only seems fair to allow all aspects of the story free play."

A table of four gay men next to the women joined in this exchange. "It's true, the media always ignores the possibility of queerness," one said. Another opined, "Sometimes there's plen-

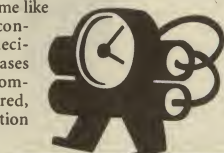
ty of good reason to ignore the possibility of queerness."

The blond was mortified by their sudden notoriety and ducked low toward his pasta. "When will I learn to keep my mouth shut," he sighed.

One of the gay men broke in on the rising tide of talk to say, "We really should look at the likely result of the Unabomber being 'outed.' Suppose Magic had come out as queer. Would he have had any chance of playing basketball again, like he's just started doing? And if DuPont were acknowledged to be queer, it would just have thrown more bad PR our way."

The reluctant woman made a rude noise. "If we push this notion, it will plenty of bad PR for our community, whether or not the Unabomber is gay."

"Well, I've always been in favor of exploring the dark zones," said the man who'd started the whole conversation. ▼



Queer Watch

HIV violence: breaking the link

by Bob Roehrer

Violence is an all-too-common partner of HIV. "HIV/Violence," a report and policy recommendations, was released Thursday, April 4 by the National Association of People With AIDS (NAPWA) and the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project (AVP).

Cornelius Baker, NAPWA's acting executive director, said it grew out of a 1992 survey by the organization which revealed that nearly a third of its members had experienced or feared HIV-related violence. He cited Ryan White as perhaps the most visible example, actually "driven from his community" because of fear of HIV.

But most of the violence is hidden. As the report states, "A palpable shroud of silence and denial surround bias-related crimes - especially where HIV is concerned."

"Shame about HIV is a fertile ground for ongoing escalating episodes of violence, especially when isolation - a common feature of the disease - exists."

The report defines HIV-related domestic violence along a continuum that "ranges from threats of abandonment to physical and sexual assault to emotional, financial, and psychological abuse." It warns that public policies of partner notification "as currently practiced, may contribute to or compound HIV-related domestic violence."

It takes the medical community to task for an unspoken policy of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" with regard to domestic violence affecting their patients. Justin Henderson, a nurse with Housing Works in New York, said most healthcare providers tried to ignore the issue because "they didn't feel they had the time, the skills, or the appropriate referral resources for such an effort."

A. Widney Brown is coordinator of the HIV-Related Program at AVP, the only person in the country working full-time on the issue. A second program will begin shortly in Chicago.

She has seen incidents of domestic abuse, of neighbors driving PWAs from their apartments, of medical and social service providers denying client services.

"Usually what makes people seek assistance is the secondary victimization," she said. The police or another agency are not helpful in dealing with the initial incident and it gets the PWA thinking, "I really need help on this issue."

In fact, 50 percent of AVP's HIV-positive clients have not reported the incidents, and three percent tried to make a report but were refused.

Brown advised that "traditional models of intervention, such as the criminal justice system, may not work." She prefers an education-driven rather than a litigation-driven system. "We must say, 'We will not tolerate this'" as a society.

The detailed recommendations of "HIV/Violence" focus upon greater research to better understand the issue; education and training of service providers to screen for violence; and a commitment by society to no longer tolerate this violence. ▼

"HIV/Violence" is available from NAPWA at (202) 898-0414 or AVP at (212) 807-6761.

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ACT UP

◀ page 22

waste.

Let MediCal do it

Other proposals are being studied by AIDS advocates and state officials. The strongest of them maintains state control of the program but consolidates administration, planning, and evaluation with MediCal (California's Medicaid program).

MediCal pays lower prices for drugs, conducts detailed evaluations regularly and does financial planning based on evaluation data. While by no means an extravagant health plan, MediCal

adds AIDS drugs immediately upon FDA approval (unlike the tedious process for adding drugs to ADAP) and negotiates rock-bottom prices from pharmaceutical companies, leveraging funds for other drugs or medical services. Enrollment will be consolidated as well, guaranteeing that applicants unqualified for one will be screened for the other. Additionally, a consolidated information system can catch county billing errors - which last year drained millions in funds from ADAP instead of MediCal.

Such policies may very well enable California to live up to the mission of ADAP: to respond in a compassionate and cost-effective way to this epidemic by providing

access to treatments for all, regardless of insurance status.

OA's system for managing ADAP has broken down. While systems that fail are sometimes repairable with years of work and strong commitment to change, one has to ask: why continue to put the limited energy of activists and advocates into a fourth year of a time-consuming effort to repair it?

Responsible entities with records of success and good management can meet the challenge now. Now is when we need care and treatment for HIV. Now is when we need public funds allocated for those purposes to be spent responsibly. It is now time to put ADAP in the right hands. ▼

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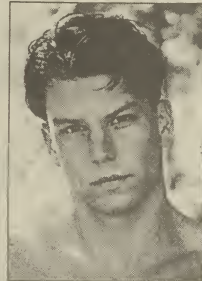
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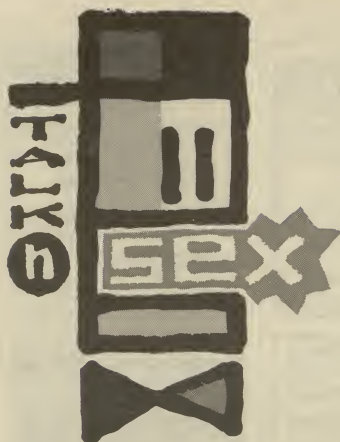
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Chad Jones reviews John Fisher's smash hit, *Medea: the Musical*, and Enrique's *The Possession of Mrs. Jones* page 37

Jewelle Gomez and *Urban Bush Women* at Center for the Arts. page 39



David Hockney: Drawing retrospective is a celebration of gay life page 41



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 26 • No. 15 • 11 April 1996

The Queen of Comedy

Scott Thompson stars in first-ever pharmaceutical parody

by Gary Morris

Scott Thompson is the openly gay "kid" from Canada's now-defunct *Kids in the Hall* series. While the show was clearly a collaborative effort, Scott distinguished himself by putting a unique stamp on a virtual army of hilarious characterizations, everything from a dead-ringer Queen of England to bitchy secretary Cathy to cross-eyed Eurotrash Francesca Fiore to beleaguered housefrau Fran. Scott is also an expert mimic of men — witness his hunky, self-absorbed drug dealer Bower, or Danny Husk, the butch AT & Love businessman. For many, including Scott himself, his crowning achievement, however, is Buddy Cole, a classic evil queen who owns a bar and pontificates brilliantly on all manner of TV-taboo subjects, from AIDS to dick sizes ranked by race. That the Kids — particularly Scott — have found a more sympathetic audience among slacker hipster types and lonely Midwestern farm girls than among queers is a mystery on a par with the Holy Trinity. I had a chance to speak with Scott about this and other matters when he rolled into town last week to do press for his new film, *The Kids in the Hall: Brain Candy*.

In person, Scott is as sexy as Danny Husk, but more relaxed. He seems remarkably focused and vibrant, even at the end of a long day of interviews. His eyes are penetrating, slightly crossed, "but in a good way," he reassures, "like Karen Black. They don't impair my vision, and they give me mystique."

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Sophisticated Lady

Films by Maya Deren and other visionary independents at SFMOMA

by Erin Blackwell

Maya Deren: *Her Radical Aspirations and Influences in the Film Avant-garde* is a six-week film series at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, dedicated to the pioneer independent filmmaker and theorist. Six programs comprising 24 films bookend Deren's complete oeuvre between works by precursors Man Ray, Cocteau and Germaine Dulac, and successors Stuart Sherman, Stan Brakhage, Kenneth Anger and Barbara Hammer. Her contemporaries Sara Kathryn Arledge, James Broughton and John and James Whitney are also represented.

Maya Deren (1917-1961), born Elenora Derenbowski in Kiev, emigrated to New York with her parents to escape the pogroms. Educated at NYU and Smith, she was secretary to African-American dancer Katherine Dunham before starting to do her own work, first in photography, then in film. Deren created the model of the independent filmmaker who writes, directs, produces, and elucidates her own work. Her book *An Anagram of Ideas of Art, Form and Film* is an important work of theory. She went on to sponsor the work of other avant-garde filmmakers, forming the Creative Film Foundation.

Meshes in the Afternoon (1943), her first film, remains the most widely shown avant-garde film made in the U.S., according to program notes by co-curator Bill Nichols. Filmed in and around a Hollywood bungalow, *Meshes* today serves as a corrective to the myth of a monolithic post-war movie aesthetic. A narrative film that disrespects the confines of objective reality, *Meshes* opens up an emotional and spiritual territory that the mainstream, to this day, can only either deride or handle with kid psychological gloves, a la Hitchcock.

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Meshes in the Afternoon, a 1943 film by Maya Deren.



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by Chris Culwell
and Pithy Galore

Have you ever wondered what Movie Night at the Vatican must be like? Does it bring to mind images of old men in robes yawning and farting to *The Ten Commandments*? If so, then think again. *The New York Times* reported this week that late last year the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, in honor of the 100th anniversary of the movies, compiled a list of 45 films from Europe, Asia and America that it considers unique for their sensitive rendering of important religious, artistic and philosophical themes. The list is not what you'd expect, at least initially.

For instance, only two decades ago, the *Times* reported, the Vatican dismissed such films as **Rossellini's** *Open City*, **Fellini's** *La Strada* and **De Sica's** *Bicycle Thief* as subversive. Now, however, these films are on the Vatican's A-list, indicating, perhaps, a change of mood in those Hallowed Halls.

Curiously, among the films cited for religious sensitivity one doesn't find standards, like the aforementioned *Commandments*, but head-turning surprises like **Pasolini's** *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* and **Luis Bunuel's** *Nazarin*, exceptional films that questioned the hypocrisy and authority of the Catholic Church.



Author Dorothy Allison

ty. In 1993, Oklahoma State revoked its invitation to the award-winning author of *Bastard Out of Carolina* to serve as artist-in-residence because she is a lesbian. Now, Allison finds that TNT's plans to air the made-for-TV version of her best-selling book, based on her own abusive upbringing, have been nixed by TNT Chairman, **Ted Turner**. The *SF Examiner* reported Monday

that TNT flacks say Turner's decision to dump *Bastard* was not political, had nothing to do with "the national debate over television violence or other political considerations." (Turner, however, has played a high-profile role as champion of the controversial V-chip.) Nevertheless, the *Examiner* revealed that Turner's decision to drop the film was probably based on fears that its theme of sexual abuse is too explicit.

Bastard Out of Carolina was directed by **Anjelica Huston**, who is now, reportedly, attempting to interest other parties in the flick. Meanwhile, the film, which stars **Jennifer Jason Leigh**, has survived initial inspection by judges at the upcoming Cannes Film Festival.

The greasy one speaks

Before he was mired in yet another SoCal oil slick, the **Oily Avian One** rang us up this week to share some of his dish. Most of it was off the record, of course, save one or two things, which he carefully classified as "rumors, hovering close to truth." Hence: Of course, it's no surprise to any of us that *The Birdcage* is a "monster" hit, a "runaway smash success story," "America's No. 1 film." How could it be anything but, given its palpable, albeit slight, humor, its generalized and sanitized depiction of homosexuality, and overall feel-good feel. But who would have guessed that in one month this decidedly mediocre product would gross \$100 million?

For those of us who love the 1978 film *La Cage aux Folles*, this is disappointing news, for it means one thing: sequels, sequels, and still more sequels. And sure enough, in between sputtering, oleaginous hacking sounds, the Avian One hinted that a Hollywood so-and-so told him last week that **Robin Williams** is ready to sign on the dotted line the minute he is asked to reprise his tepid role.

While the Avian One was still conscious he also revealed details of a glam press junket he attended for the new film *Mrs. Winterbourne*, starring **Shirley MacLaine**, **Ricki Lake** and **Brendan Fraser**. "It's a real

turkey," Oily revealed gleefully, "but it's very entertaining, and Brendan Fraser is drop-dead gorgeous throughout."

Oily then told us that after the press screening, he met the stars for lunch at LA's swanky Four Seasons Hotel, and though the "others" — presumably **Ricki Tacky** and **Brendan** — all ordered their tea and crumpets from room service, **Missy MacLaine** demanded that the chef prepare her goodies right there in her room. No doubt because she wanted to supervise his *every* move. Is she afraid someone is going to sprinkle too much belladonna in her salad?

Local heroes

A while back we reported on a **bitter, rotting queen** who was overheard braying at Cafe Flore to a cadre of fawning acolytes about the paucity of internationally recognized artists living and working in SF. Well, **Miss Bitter** was mistaken when she pontificated thusly, and she's still wrong. In fact, **Out There's** New York desk reports that two very important SF artists, **Brett Reichman** and **Vincent Fecteau** (Nayland Blake's studio assistant), are currently being shown at Manhattan's tony Feature gallery, operated by he of the single name, **Hudson**. Meanwhile, another noteworthy local creator, **J. John Priola**, is exhibiting at the Mark Foxx Gallery in LA's Baby Bergamot district. So, we implore the Braying One to have a little more respect for her not-so artistically impoverished clime. It could be worse, darling. You could be living in Montana, where the range of indigenous artistry doesn't extend beyond guns and bombs.

Death and Transfiguration

Another Easter has come and gone, but last week while all the

world was celebrating the death and resurrection of the **Prince of Peace**, we at the B.A.R. were busy celebrating the death and rebirth of a newspaper, our own in fact, which turned 25 on April 4. Apropos this special anniversary, **Mr. Ross** — a.k.a., **The Munificent One** — decided it was high time we champion a new look for ye olde rag. So, at a glam party at Pleasuredome last Thursday, we bid fond farewell to the old logo that sat atop this paper for more years than anyone cares to remember, and said hello to a breathtaking new look, courtesy of design wizard **Adrian Roberts**.

The party itself was a fabulous bash that brought out some of SF's best and worst. There were rent boys, toupees and canapés, eight-foot drag queens, hors d'oeuvres, a caterwauling **Mr. Marcus** (oops, a redundancy), an enthusiastic **Carole Migden**, an ebullient **Jim James**, and, of course, **Pussy Tourette**.

There were, naturally, hallucinatory touches, too: a phalanx of aging fan dancers who twisted and turned to a string of '70s

disco hits, and the *piece de resistance*, a mammoth cake emblazoned with the visage of our benevolent leader. Later, this super dessert was the source of a surreal spectacle when **The Munificent One** himself, wearing a sardonic grin, mumbled, "Now I'm going to cut my own throat" and proceeded to drag a toothy butcher blade across the gullet of his egg and flour replica.

All this excitement was simply too much to take, so we fled the premises to reclaim our senses, all that is, save pathetic Pithy, who stupidly returned to the dance floor, where she promptly fell under the spell of a force beyond her control, a **Catalonian prince in black** who negotiated a series of improbably delicate turns around Pithy in weather-beaten hiking boots. Although the Prince assiduously averted Pithy's hungry stare, she managed at least once to fasten his serene gaze, and though it was dark in hell, she had no difficulty recognizing in his bewitching blue-green eyes the calm, saving grace of a perfectly beautiful soul. Pithy has never been the same since. ▼



Andrew Rublyov

Interesting, too, is the list's broad, ecumenical range of tastes. In the religious category alone, **Carl Dreyer's** undisputed classic, *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, takes its place next to **William Wyler's** turgid *Ben-Hur*. Similarly, a film like *Babette's Feast*, which hardly wears its religious heart on its sleeve, is in the same category with **Andre Tarkovsky's** three-hour religious epic *Andre Rublyov*, about Russia's famous medieval icon painter.

Still, while it's easy to commend the Vatican for loosening up enough to recognize the artistic importance of such irreligious works as *Fantasia*, 2001, and *Citizen Kane*, the powers that be give themselves away as nervous closet moralists by shutting out the most blatantly Godless of all filmmakers, Italy's own soulful Magus, **Antonioni**.

Too much reality?

Writer **Dorothy Allison** has never shied away from controver-

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Flotsam and jetsam

'Fresh Kill': style over content

by Wendell Ricketts

If you're the sort of person who refers to movies as "films," who tends to think of a single director's work as an oeuvre, and who can use the phrase "auteur theory" in a sentence without flinching, then Shu Lea Cheang's first full-length feature, *Fresh Kill*, is right up your alley. If, on the other hand, you would be unpleasantly surprised to learn that there are those who look to the MTV video for artistic inspiration, then *Fresh Kill* is only going to piss you off. Last seen here at the 1994 San Francisco International Film Festival, *Fresh Kill*, which stars Sarita Choudhury and Erin McMurtry, opens for a two-day run at the Castro Theatre on April 17.

Perhaps the single most useful thing to know about this film is that producer/director Cheang has, up until now, limited her creative output to video installations (including work exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art) and to "cybernetic digital media World Wide Web interactive installations," one of which is currently on display at the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis. No surprise, then, that *Fresh Kill* is visually extraordinary — Jane Castle's photography and cinematography, in fact, are masterful. But aside from the visual aspect, *Fresh Kill* is garbled and slight, the kind

Erin McMurtry and Sarita Choudhury in *Fresh Kill*.

of gallery-video persiflage that is more interesting to talk about than experience.

Fresh Kill takes its name from — and is set beside — *Fresh Kills*, the Staten Island landfill that is the largest garbage dump in the world. And therein lies a clue to the film's three themes: multinational corporations are polluting the planet, starting with the Third World; advertising slogans are polluting our brains; people who sit around eating expensive sushi in trendy restaurants while talking about their multimillion dollar business deals are polluting the landscape of our daily lives.

All true — and yet the film's interest in these topics is negligible. They're merely the backdrop for a disjointed screed in which the ubiquitousness of television stands in for everything that is wrong with American culture. Ironically, of course, Cheang's film technique is a worshipful iteration of television, and what's most annoying about *Fresh Kill* is its presumption that an artist is free to criticize the dehumanization, alienation, and lack of meaning of contemporary existence without taking responsibility for popularizing the very tools through which those aspects of urban culture are disseminated.

In other words, if you want to argue that television has ruined the life of the mind by giving us all a 15-second attention span, don't make a movie that screams style over content.

But in case that's not what is really most annoying about *Fresh Kill*, here's a runner-up: scriptwriter Jessica Hagedorn's coy, grad-school literary references, which are, one supposes, meant to be meaningful. (One character is named Mayakovsky, for example, no doubt after Vladimir Mayakovsky, the Soviet writer and famous suicide of the 1920s who, in addition to creating striking poetry, made a living writing cheesy advertising slogans.)

Given Cheang's current projects, it was probably inevitable that members of the *Fresh Kill* crew would create an impressive Web site for the movie, complete with graphics, interviews with the principals, and a downloadable trailer. The URL, for those inclined, is <http://www/echonyc.com/~freshkill/comingsoon.html>. Check it out. In all the ways that matter, the Web pages are more engaging than the film. ▼

Fresh Kill plays the Castro Theatre April 17-18.

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THEATRE

Attic exorcises

Medea: the Musical, The Possession of Mrs. Jones

by Chad Jones

Now that John Fisher's *Medea: the Musical* is ensconced in the relatively posh Stage Door Theatre — the previous tenant, A.C.T., now has even better digs — the Union Square tourist masses will discover what legions of San Franciscans already know: *Medea* is the most fun you can have in a San Francisco theater.

Intelligent, spry and achingly funny, *Medea* is as fresh as it was almost two years ago when the show, which began as a U.C. Berkeley student production, made its San Francisco premiere. Fisher's wry take on show business, homosexuality, misogynist Greek myths, heterosexist agendas and cheap hair conditioners skewers the backstage musical in fresh, funny ways that would make Cole Porter proud.

Performed almost entirely by the original cast — a troupe aptly named Sassymouth — *Medea* is a non-stop juggernaut of giggly sight gags, politically astute observations, ultra gay-positive hijinks, fine-chested boys and just plain delicious stupidity.

Paul Tena plays himself play-

membered son Absyrtus. Other pop tunes like "I Know I'll Never Love This Way Again," "I Will Survive" and "Of Thee I Sing" are twisted into delightfully funny new forms.

The only difference between this new *Medea* and the first one seems to be the cast's voracious appetite for laughs. They're hamming it up a bit more than they used to and forcing laughs a little more strenuously, but there are so many laughs to be had that it doesn't really matter. From the overwhelmingly adoring audience reaction, it looks like Fisher's *Medea: the Musical* could supplant *Beach Blanket Babylon* as the quintessential San Francisco theater experience.

Religious conversion

Medea is not the only game in town at the moment. Those zany folks from the off-center, engagingly retro musical trio known as Enrique have premiered another in their *Brite Sleep Trilogy*. *The Possession of Mrs. Jones*, now playing at the 21 Bernice Street Playhouse, is actually part one of the trilogy. *The Cereal Killers*, which premiered three years ago, is part two. Part three, *Suburbia 3000*, is promised this fall.



Kathy Fenker plays Evelyn Jones in *The Possession of Mrs. Jones*.

has just purchased heaven and hell.

The sporting cast does its best to create an all-singing, all-dancing epic of heaven and hell on the cramped stage and manages to imbue the proceedings with enough knowing camp energy to keep things fun.

There's a sameness to the score, but at least the oft-repeated sound is an enjoyable one. The numbers "Spiritual In My Butt" and "X Marks the Spot" are especially rousing, but as for the singing, well, the cast is likable even if their

vocal techniques lack luster. As directed by Charles Herman-Wurmfeld, *Mrs. Jones* is possessed of a manic energy that makes this two-hour, three-act musical a thoroughly enjoyable "exorcise" in local musical theater. ▼

Medea: the Musical continues at the Golden Gate Theatre. For information, call 433-9500. *The Possession of Mrs. Jones* continues at the 21 Bernice Street Playhouse. Call 267-1868 for information.



Paul Tena, John Fisher, and Elsa Wolthausen

ing a gay Jason in a fictional Euripides Festival's *Medea: the Musical*. The director/writer, played by Fisher himself, wants a gay take on a heretofore heterosexual Greek legend. Elsa Wolthausen, who plays Medea, fears she will look foolish as her character unknowingly falls in love with a flagrant queen. Things get decidedly complicated when Paul actually falls in love with Elsa and starts playing the whole thing straight — in every sense of the word.

As the troupe rehearses the show, they trot out one deliriously funny musical number after another. Gabriel Macen as Theseus, King of Athens, croons a hysterically warped "Aphrodite" to the tune of "Copacabana" as well as a macabre but glorious "Misty" while Aetes, King of Colchis (Craig Doede, who does an astonishing Joanne Worley impersonation), collects pieces of his dis-

The order is a little out of whack, which is appropriate because there is really nothing in whack about *Mrs. Jones*. Scrappy but endearing, this rock musical may not have the comic flair and polish of *Medea*, but what it lacks in content it makes up for in enthusiasm.

Written by D'Arcy Drollinger, who also provides the score, *The Possession of Mrs. Jones* pokes into the past and explores that ugly transition when the fabulous '50s turned into the chaotic, violent and explosive '60s. Evelyn Jones (a Sandra Bullock-like Kathy Fenker) is the perfect housewife. Her world revolves around her family, appliances and Valium. But things start going wrong when God (Drollinger) and Satan (Jason Mecier) pop out of her washing machine and order her to kill the president of Productomatic, the evil conglomerate that

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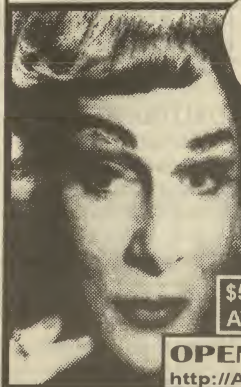
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PERFORMANCE

The vampire L'esbian

'Bones and Ash' at Center for the Arts

by Wendell Ricketts

As a kind of camp staple, the lesbian vampire story has a long, if not entirely venerable, history. But Jewelle Gomez's first novel, *The Gilda Stories*, published in 1991, turned all preconceptions inside out. Gomez's saga of a family of vampires — most of them black and most of them lesbian — spans 100 years, moving from the pre-Civil War South to a dystopian future in which the rich hunt vampires for their life-extending blood.

The matriarch of the clan, the eponymous Gilda, is a witness, a teacher, and a medium who communicates with the spirits of the Vampire ancestors; they, although "truly" dead, are the keepers of the threads of history. For purposes of the novel, of course, that history is a lineage of vampires. But Gomez, a San Francisco-based poet and activist, extends the metaphor to comment on the arc of African and African-American life in the United States. More than that, she allows Gilda to muse on the lessons — and the burdens — of history. For Gilda, that is, slavery isn't just the topic of passed-down cautionary tales; she has actually lived it.

And now — thanks to Gomez, the interdisciplinary dance/theater troupe Urban Bush Women, and composer Toshi Reagon — Gilda lives again. *Bones and Ash: A Gilda Story*, an evening-length adaptation of Gomez's novel incorporating spoken and sung text, original music, and Jawole Willa Jo Zollar's distinctive, folklore-tinted choreography, opens a three-night run at the Center for the Arts at Yerba Buena Gardens

on April 11.

Like *The Gilda Stories*, *Bones and Ash* chronicles an entire century in the African-American experience. A runaway slave — first known only as "the Girl" — takes refuge in the home of Gilda, the vampire proprietress of a New Orleans bordello. Even as the Girl is learning to leave behind the terror of slavery, she is also learning to read, to think, and to live in a world in which her fate belongs to her.

More than that, she is assimilating the "vampire ethic" — taking blood, not life, and exchanging visions, solutions to problems, and peace of mind for the mortal blood she must have in order to live. Gilda, in fact — already 300 years old as *Bones and Ash* opens — is preparing for "the true death" and is grooming the Girl to take her place. At the conclusion of Gilda's lavish last rites, the Girl assumes Gilda's name — and at least some of her wisdom.

Thus begins the new Gilda's journey across the years — from Yerba Buena (old San Francisco) to Rosebud, Missouri to Boston and New York and on into the future, when vampires are forced to hide in caves, a journey that powerfully intertwines the themes of power, discovery, loss and family.

Dumped by the NEA

Bones and Ash marks the second engagement in the Center for the Arts "More Than Dance ... Choreographers in Collaboration" series, created and curated by Artistic Consultant for Performing Arts Baraka Sele. The "More Than Dance ..." series, Sele says, is intended to "create an environment for stimulation, creation, and relationship-building.

It pleases me to give artists the forum for taking risks."

"Downsizing" in the arts has, indeed, made large-scale collaborations risky, and all too rare. But it probably wasn't financial risk that caused the NEA to veto funding for the final performance phase of the *Bones and Ash* project in 1995. It might have had something to do with the idea that staging work by a black lesbian feminist writer brought with it some tricky political ramifications.

Although the NEA had funded the early development of *Bones and Ash*, and despite the fact that the final project had received peer-panel approval, the NEA pulled performance funding at the last minute. The NEA public relations office made sure that the incident received minimal press coverage, though they carefully supplied word of the vetoes to House appropriations subcommittee members who were then debating the future of the NEA.

It's a mark of courage and perseverance, then, that Gomez and her collaborators — along with co-commissioners Jacob's Pillow, the Walker Art Center, and Center for the Arts, among others — remained undaunted in their commitment to *Bones and Ash*. And courage and perseverance are traits that a 100-year-old vampire named Gilda would surely say are the best lessons we can take from a long and checkered history. ▼



Urban Bush Women performing *Bones and Ash: A Gilda Story*.

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SF Ballet

◀ page 38

The finest of the duos we did see is to Milton "Who Cares If You Listen?" Babbitt's "Minute Waltz." Its angularities inspired Martin to explore arms in every possible rotator, cuff-wrenching position. It's fantastic as geometry and funny as a take on human relations; Katita Waldo and Stephen Legate looked smashing. The one "romantic" waltz, by Moran himself ("In Memoriam — Maurice Ravel," a deconstruction of Ravel's delirious

"La Valse"), was delivered memorably by Tan and Damian Smith, a rugged Aussie new to the corps but sure to get more action; he is all muscle and attitude. Julia Adam and Peter Brandenhoff looked like a couple of Jerome Robbins' gym rats in Tom Constanten's "Dejavale" (he's SFB's current hunk-and-a-half), but Sherri LeBlanc (Tina's sister) did not look secure in the arms of Steven Norman. Still, *The Waltz Project* is a keeper, despite the music; it offers relative unknowns the chance to shine, and it can only get better with repetition. ▼

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Yin and yang

Guest conductor, soloist no match for MTT

by Philip Campbell

As we enter the final quarter of the current San Francisco Symphony season, regular patrons must be aware by now of the not-so subtle differences between concerts led by new Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas and those performed under the baton of his estimable roster of guest conductors.

Every performance with MTT has the air of an event, the sense that it is something to be savored and discussed. The hall fairly hums with electricity when he is on the podium, giving every indication that our honeymoon with the conductor continues unabated.

This is not to say, however, that there have not been concerts of

high musical value without him, only that they are not the same thing. Recent weeks at Davies Hall have provided ample evidence.

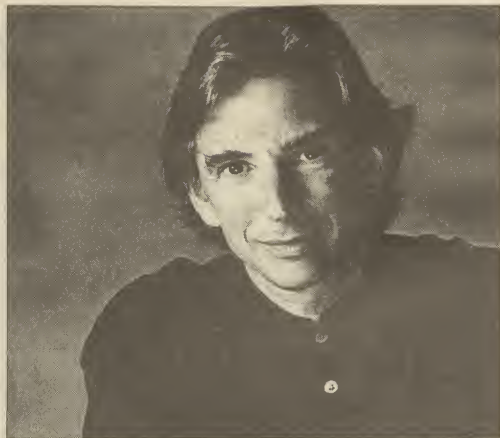
The concert edition of Leonard Bernstein's joyous Broadway musical *On the Town* has already been a smash hit in London and on PBS, so it was a special thrill for local audiences to witness essentially the same cast in a duplicate production here two weeks ago.

Minor weaknesses aside, the collaboration of MTT, soloists, narrators Comden and Green and the orchestra did a bang-up job on the stage of Davies Hall. Engaged in a labor of love, Tilson Thomas urged his starry line-up of singers through an often exciting and ultimately touching evening of tuneful nostalgia.

The clever concert staging by

Patricia Birch adapted well to a smaller stage, and soloists Frederica von Stade, Thomas Hampson, Kurt Ollman and Tyne Daly recreated their London performances with gusto. Richard Zeller replaced Samuel Ramey in the multiple roles of Pitkin/Workman/Announcer and proved himself fully capable in each. His rendition of the hilarious "I Understand" was one of the evening's most memorable moments.

Joyce Castle struck me as a funnier Madame Dilly than Evelyn Lear; Kimberly King was a boffo Diana Dream, and Carol Bach-y-Rita had the audience roaring over her brief bit as Dolores Dolores. Only Kristen Clayton as Ivy seemed tentative, but her singing voice is pleasing, and she did nothing to dim the fun.



Michael Tilson Thomas

Nancy Ellison Rollins

Naturally, the biggest crowd pleasers were narrators Betty Comden and Adolph Green. Although the years have taken their toll on frail Green, Comden looked and sounded remarkably vital. The heartfelt standing ovation both received was as much for their careers as the concert itself. How could we not respond to the living embodiment of some of the happiest moments in American musical history?

None of this was lost on Michael Tilson Thomas, who virtually danced his way through every page of Leonard Bernstein's wonderful score. The instrumental passages came to vivid life, even without Jerome Robbins' choreography. Clearly, MTT loves this music, and the orchestra played like a big gorgeous pit band.

While Tyne Daly belted "I Can Cook Too," I couldn't help but think the conductor should be singing this himself.

Belohlavek, Andras Schiff

The following week brought Jiri Belohlavek back to the podium after a two-year absence. Once again he proved a satisfying interpreter of works from the Czech repertoire. His most recent appearance started with a richly

burnished performance of Brahms' *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, which dovetailed nicely with Bohuslav Martinu's sonically fascinating Symphony No. 6 (*Fantaisies symphoniques*) and Dvorak's Piano Concerto in G minor.

Andras Schiff, the quirky and brilliant Hungarian pianist, should be thanked for bringing Dvorak's lovable piece finally to the San Francisco Symphony. It's somewhat surprising to think that a major work by a well-loved composer has had to wait so long to be heard, but to be honest, the work is hardly a barn-burner on a par with Tchaikovsky's First or Rachmaninoff's Second.

Still, Schiff played it as if it were a masterpiece, and his nervous energy and enthusiasm almost convinced us that the composer's lovely melodies were heaven-sent.

Almost a schizophrenic view of the San Francisco Symphony if one attended both concerts, but comparisons prove odious in the long run, for each program was successful on its own terms. Next season will provide more opportunity for equation, as MTT's programming moves a little closer to center. For now, we can relish the differences between musical apples and oranges. ▼

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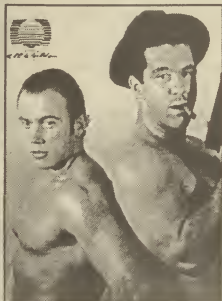
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Hockney, fast and loose

by Will Shank

David Hockney: *A Drawing Retrospective*; Chronicle Books, \$50

It is no secret that David Hockney is a homosexual. In this handsome catalogue of the exhibition assembled last year at London's Royal Academy of Art by Ulrich Luckhardt and Paul Melia, a lavish array of homoerotic images is featured alongside the artist's carefully controlled still lifes, stage sets, portraits, interiors and exteriors.

Hockney's life and work have been well-chronicled elsewhere, from his emergence out of Yorkshire obscurity to his appearance as the *enfant terrible* of London's art scene in the early '60s to his expatriation to Los Angeles, where he has become one of the most successful and popular artists of the century. If his colorful, large-scale paintings are his most familiar works (in fact, they define a style of Southern California imagery from the 1960s and '70s), his drawings hold their own special allure.

Although this is not the first attempt to introduce Hockney the draftsman to the public, the Royal Academy exhibition chronicled here is certainly the most comprehensive, complementing the exhaustive 1989 painting retrospective at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Still, Hockney is a prolific artist, and the authors have had to select carefully in order to represent his entire career out of an enormous body of drawings and related works that can be difficult to classify in traditional terms of media. Works from the 1980s, besides his famous Polaroid collages (which the artist refers to as "drawings"), include color photocopies as well as faxed art work on paper.

Hockney's refusal to be stereotyped is evident throughout the catalogue, as he waltzes gracefully from delicate academic life studies to Matisse-like abstractions to Picassoesque distortions. The loving care with which he renders a plateful of asparagus rivals the sensuality of his naked men emerging from the shower, or his boys lying butt-up in bed. The secret language that disguises his homosexual themes in the earliest work disappears after he settles in Los Angeles, which, for Hockney, "corresponds with the fantasy." His studies of other men are unapologetic celebrations of his gay life.

Until April 28, the exhibition is on view at LACMA, where the drawings are complemented by an LA twist: a Hockney-painted BMW in the museum's central courtyard. ▼

Will Shank is Chief Conservator of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and an occasional critic.

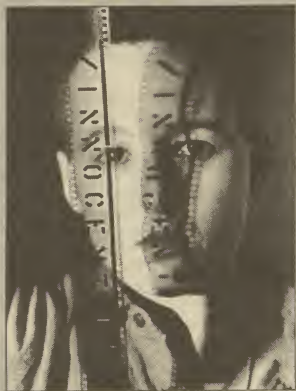


David Hockney: *Self-Portrait*, 1983.

FILM

Trailer camp

Tonight (April 11) at the Castro Theatre, Jenni Olson (right), former co-director of the SF International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, presents *Trailer Camp*, the latest in her ongoing series of movie trailer spectacles. At turns ridiculous and sublime, this collection of original 35mm theatrical trailers runs in "roughly chronological order" — '60s through the '90s — through a unique movie lover's hit parade. From Warhol to



Supergirl, this eclectic bouquet brings viewers the long-lost but never forgotten trailers to such twisted screen gems as Mae West's *Sextette* and Divine's *Lust in the Dust*. Sicko women's prison movies and the stupidest musicals of the '80s compete for the camp Hall of Fame." Says Olson of her latest compendium, "The film print quality varies widely — of course — but the really faded and scratched-up ones are the best." Runs 7:30 and 9:15 p.m. at the Castro. For information, call 621-6120. ▼

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Scott Thompson

◀ Arts cover

Gary Morris: Scott, how is your relationship with the other Kids now that the series has ended?

Scott Thompson: It's no secret that we're having some problems. My relationship with Dave [Foley] has been better. I'm hopeful that we can work it out. With the other Kids, it's fine.

How about the all-important Bellini?

Bellini and I have never been tighter. We actually had a very rough period after the show ended where we didn't talk for a long time.

Well, did he dance on your grave

in the last episode?

(Laughs). Paul [Bellini] and I are best friends. We've known each other for a long time. We're probably going to write a movie together, a Buddy Cole thing, or something.

A whole movie devoted to Buddy Cole?

I'd like that.

What about the Buddy Cole character? There has always been that controversy in the gay community about Buddy, like, how dare he be such a size queen? It's like they don't get any of the political message behind the character. The dick sizes by race monologue, for example.

I just think people should get a

sense of humor. I think it's indicative of the immaturity of the gay community. A truly mature community can take criticism, parody, it can take comedy. And in terms of the stereotypes I used for Buddy, if you think most gay men don't "read" gay, then you've never been in a gay bar, do you know what I mean? I mean, most of us read gay. And he was my most intelligent character. How could that be negative? What I found really shocking about the incredible ignoring of the Buddy Cole character was that people like those snap queens from *In Living Color* were elevated to sainthood and Buddy was not.

Part of that may be a function of the mainstream versus the alternative community. There's no political element in those queens on In Living Color, and mainstream audiences want brainless queens, not smart ones. Look at The Birdcage.

Yeah. Nathan Lane gives a brilliant performance, but it's an incredibly empty character. It's called *The Birdcage* because he's a bird — a little canary trapped in your house, banging against the walls. Amusing — but not Buddy Cole.

Apropos the "whole gay thing," some of us wonder how you — not just you, but all the Kids — have been able to interweave so many gay elements and gender confusions into a show that is still marketable. You've got sketches with two straight guys like Kevin and Bruce tongue-swapping, a Chicken Lady masturbating on a mechanical horse, and drag queens by the ton. There's the scene of the movie star

next page ►



Scott Thompson

Marc Geller

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REVIEW

Brain Candy: feed your head



George Kravitz

by Gary Morris

The "brain candy" in the title of the Kids' new film is Gleemonex, a Prozac-style drug that cures depression by locating and fixing in the mind the user's happiest memory. With research funded by an evil corporation, the drug is widely prescribed to the general populace, with the result that it Stepfordizes the masses, eventually rendering them comatose.

The "happiest memories" form the basis of most of the film's elaborate set-pieces, and are typical of the Kids' style. Mrs. Hurdicure (Scott Thompson) is like an aging, slightly dotty Donna Reed, too ignorant to realize her kids can't stand her. Gleemonex helps her recall a "glorious" Thanksgiving dinner with her kids, who come in the house, throw a present at her and leave while she stands smiling with a turkey in her hands.

Another Scott character, closet-case Wally, glowingly remembers being verbally abused in the army. The drug triggers one of the film's highlights, a musical number called "I'm Gay!" in which Wally comes out of the closet and marches and cartwheels down the street singing while his neighbors — who look as if they have wandered off the set of a '50s white-bread sitcom — mindlessly cheer his new

openness. Typical of the "casual attack" style of the film, Wally's wife comes home and says, "Hi kids, where's Dad?" "Upstairs masturbating to gay porn," one of them indifferently replies.

Brain Candy works in some familiar characters from the Kids' TV show, *The Kids in the Hall*, including the Queen of England, the vicious Serbian cabbie, Nina Bedford, and White Trash Man and Woman, along with some bizarre variants, like Klemptor, a sort of mutant Francesca Fiore. The most controversial character, one that almost ended up on the cutting-room floor, is the wheelchair-bound Cancer Boy (Bruce), whose maudlin optimism ("Each day is a gift") and pitiful weakness move the film into the far fringes of comic bad taste.

Fans of the Kids will be thrilled at the inventiveness and energy of *Brain Candy*. The anti-corporate motif may be less subtle than in some of their sketches, but this is minor carping given the wealth of brilliant characterizations and the rampant gender busting. Those who still scratch their heads at the antics of this ground-breaking troupe won't likely be converted. ▼

Brain Candy opens in general release Friday, April 12

FILM

Maya Deren

◀ Arts cover

Deren herself is the film's principal performer. With her huge head of frizzy hair, slanted eyes and full lips, she's what a casting director would call "exotic." She's a beauty. With legs like tree trunks and the grace of a dancer, she radiates great physical force and presence.

The protagonist of *Meshe*, nameless and silent, splits off into clones of herself, in order to enact multiple variants of a central narrative. Of even greater interest than the enigmatic storyline and evocative storytelling devices is the complexity of the self and the irrational nature of reality that the film conveys.

Deren's *Ritual in Transfigured Time* (1946) uses as some of its raw material a Greenwich Village party peopled with Anais Nin and lesser-known bohemians. The documentary interest of the film is of a piece with its formal values. To film Nin and her crowd with stop-action, slow-motion and repeat frames is to liberate an energetic chunk of U.S. artist's histories from the deadening linearity of conformist documentation. (Nichols says Gore Vidal and even Duchamp are onscreen, but I failed to recognize them.)

Ritual witnesses the parallel universe of an underground aesthetic that was judged unfit for mainstream consumption. The loss to our culture of formal cinematic alternatives is much greater than the ravages of the Hays Office, whose sole object was content. Then came McCarthyism. That we are once again in the

trenches of the Culture Wars indicates that the U.S. will never sanction its avant-garde artists, which is all the more reason to pay attention to these films.

Of special historical interest: *Ritual* will be shown with the other films that accompanied its showing during the museum's first season of Art in Cinema programs 50 years ago, for which Deren herself was present. That 1946-47 series established the museum's commitment to U.S. filmmakers, as opposed to New York's Museum of Modern Art's focus on European work. Let's hope SFMOMA's celebration of its cinematic legacy will translate into similar innovative programming in the future.

Films by other auteurs include Stuart Sherman's *Sixteen Short Films* (1977-81). These elegant minimalist quickies are like haikus filmed by Magritte. With the deadpan of Buster Keaton and the facial hair of a French Impressionist, Sherman explores the limits of the camera, as a metaphor for the limits of cognitive and emotive perception. His attempts to defy space-time and the laws of gravity are revealed as mere tricks, and the seemingly objective vision of the camera is unmasked as an arbitrary rectangle.

It would be difficult to overestimate the filmmaking prowess of Stan Brakhage. Two wild examples of his art hint at his range. SFMOMA's Curator of Media Arts, Robert Riley, who co-curated the series with Nichols, sees in *The Way to Shadow Garden* (1954) a metaphor for life in the closet. The young blonde man who goes stir crazy alone in his

room does wear an awfully loud tie. His angst, catharsis, and subsequent transcendence to a new sense of vision — for which Brakhage films him in negative — could apply to any unbearable psychic situation that is overcome by a passage through madness.

Brakhage's *Act of Seeing With One's Eyes* (1971) is a compassionate realization of an audacious concept. A half-hour long montage of autopsies filmed in the Pittsburgh morgue — without a soundtrack — the film leads us squeamish voyeurs gently and artfully into the heart of the matter: our mortality and the universal nature of the human corpse. The title is the literal translation of the Greek autopsy and seems relevant to the whole filmmaking enterprise.

Jean Cocteau's *Blood of a Poet* (1930) mixes homoerotic beefcake with time-traveling whimsy and gender disphoria in a fabulous declaration of poetic independence from all the norms, narrative or social. Barbara Hammer's *Multiple Orgasm* (1977) superimposes a vulva over Georgia O'Keeffe-type terrain to ecstatic effect. Germaine Dulac's *Smiling Madame Beudet* (1923) examines the homicidal fantasies of a woman trapped in the claustrophobic domesticity of a bourgeois marriage. And that's just a sampling. ▼

The film series runs April 12-May 19 (Fridays and Sundays at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.) at SFMOMA. Admission is \$7. For further information, or a program schedule, call 357-4000.

Scott Thompson

◀ previous page

who dies of AIDS in bed with Bruce, who's semi-naked, playing a hustler — "Surf Cop."

The evil Comedy Central censored that sketch after the first showing.

What about "Chalet 2000," when me and Bruce — the Queen and the Beaver — neck? Tongue! And it's literally two men — one is playing the Queen, an untouchable creature, necking with a beaver, the symbol of Canada. So, literally that's all about Canada fucking the home land!

Not to mention bestiality, homosexuality and drag! It's amazing you were even able to do it for mainstream — more or less — TV.

I think it was the time. We came about at the right time. Barriers were falling everywhere, not only East Germany, the Berlin Wall. Walls were coming down everywhere. Culture was crashing! And we snuck in.

Bruce McCulloch has featured some of his girlfriends in sketches. Have you put any of your boyfriends in?

My first boyfriend — the one I was with for three years — is in a number of the first- and second-year sketches. Look for a black guy with dreads. He was the inspiration for Francesca Fiore. He didn't speak English very well.

Maybe also for Klemptor in Brain Candy? She's a more extreme version of Francesca, with that terrifying overbite.

Definitely Klemptor is related. She's great — she's so ugly.

Any special boyfriends right now?

I can't give his name because his grandparents don't know that he's

gay. But he's out to everyone else. He's been out since he was 16. He's a film student. We've been together a year and eight months.

Any secret affairs between any of the Kids?

(Mock shock) Oh, I've never been asked that before. No. I'm not saying there hasn't been a crush or two.

(Noticing harried publicist) Scott, I guess I better let you go.

Publicist: Thanks, Gary.

Scott, could I have your autograph?

Yeah!

Could I have a hug?

Sure.

Could I touch your penis?

(To publicist) He's quoting. Actually that's based on reality. A guy wanted to sign my penis. He had a magic marker and everything.

Oh, that must have been interesting.

I let him.

That must have been even more interesting. ▼

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LEATHER SCENE

Mr. SF Leather Judges and the Eagle's 15th

by Mister Marcus

The Mr. San Francisco Leather '96 Committee announced last week the names of the judges for the 18th Annual Leather Contest to be held at the Alcazar Theatre on Saturday night, April 20. The judges chosen for this year's competition are: Head Judge Marcus Wona-cott, former editor of *Drummer* and currently a leather columnist in the SF edition of *Frontiers*. Former Ms. SF Leather Queen Cougar is the only female judge. Bear Dog Hoffman, scion of Mud Creek Media, will join AIDS Emergency Fund board member Keith Truitt and creative leather designer Carlos Larranaga on the panel, as will Wolf Mirasol.

Stud About Town George Carreras is an independent contestant who will compete for the title, along with Daddy's Mr. Leather Gary Virginia, Mr. SF Eagle Leather Joe Piazza, Mr. Edge Leather Gary Strickland and Mr. Castro Station Leather Bart Bartholomew.

Gabrielle's Leather Works on Upper Market is creating (and donating) a fabulous design for the winner's title vest. It is superb! Wait till you see it! The winner also gets round-trip airfare to Chicago, hotel accommodations and will compete with leathermen from around the world for the International Mr. Leather 1996 title on Memorial Day Weekend. Not yet confirmed: there may be more than one San Francisco leatherman competing in Chicago.

The roster of entertainment for the Alcazar event has been finalized. The committee is extremely proud to have International Mr. Drummer '89 Brian Dawson co-emceeing with the very popular Miranda von Stockhausen, Ms. South Bay/San Jose Leather.

Tickets at \$20/advance or \$25/door are going fast. They're



Mr. Castro Station Leather winners (l to r): Barry Rogers, first runner-up; Mr. Leif, second runner-up; and Bart Bartholomew, the new Mr. Castro Station Leather '96.

available at both Mister S Leathers locations and at Mercury Mail Order at 4084 18th St. (second level). By the way, the host Hotel Congress in Chicago is completely sold out, so if you haven't made reservations, start looking.

Last Wednesday, April 3, the Castro Station Bar plunged into the leather game when they staged their first-ever leather contest. A total of seven dudes competed, and the judging panel was composed of former emperors and empresses. Emperor Steve and Empress Cockatielia did the honors, and the big crowd was boisterous but supportive. Ms. Goldblatt, er, uh, Goldblatt, was there and expounded quite vehemently about contests, judges and emcees at length.

After interviews, the guys did the leather image, speech and physique thing onstage, which elicited some surprising/humorous results. When it was all over, the winner was Bart Bartholomew, who certainly has been a presence in leather/court commu-

nities. The first runner-up was Barry Rogers; the second runner-up was Mr. Leif. This brings the contestant total to five for Mr. SF Leather '96. I hope you'll be there on April 20 to see who wins!

SF-Eagle turns 15

A two-day celebration of the Eagle's 15th anniversary is scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, April 23 and 24, at the SF-Eagle. The doors open at 2000 on Tuesday, and the first 300 people through the door will get a free T-shirt. On Wednesday, the coveted anniversary pins will be distributed and a celebration buffet will be served.

Come on down and show your appreciation for a business that constantly gives back to the community. Congratulations to the SF-Eagle on its 15th! Everyone, I'm sure, joins me in wishing you much success in the future!

Whither goeth your sash?

Speaking of Chicago, the Leather Archives have been established in Chicago, with former *Drummer* publisher, Tony De-Blase, the main man on the board of directors. In an effort to add leather memorabilia and artifacts to the collection, Jeff Rose, a former Mr. Leather/Portland, hit upon the idea of former title holders donating their sashes to the museum. Leather title vests and/or title belts seem to be replacing the sash.

If you have a sash hanging around collecting dust, you might want to consider donating it to the archives. For info on how to contribute, write: Jeff Rose, NLA Portland, P.O. Box 5161, Portland, OR 97208; or call (503) 727-4148.

Local historical groups are not at all enthusiastic about this concept, so if you San Francisco leather title holders prefer to donate your sashes to our gay/lesbian archive, make your intentions known by calling (415) 441-1128.

New barracks for SF Leathernecks

You are hereby advised that the SF Leathernecks have decided that their considerably larger new meeting place is permanent for their parties, which are held on the second Saturday of each month. If you're 18 or older and want to play in a convenient, clean and sober environment, this well-equipped dungeon is for



Former SF Leather Dyke Daddy Skeeter Wildman thanks the Cable Car audience for her victory in the Outstanding Women's Event category.

LEATHER SCENE

EVENTURES IN LEATHER

Thursday, April 11

Mr. August 1997 on the Bare Chest Calendar gets selected tonight promptly at 2200. The Knights of Malta MC will be beer-busting from 2100 to midnight. Come on down. Win \$100, fame, maybe even a date.

Lupann's Restaurant, one of the more leather-friendly places in the Castro, continues their 10th anniversary celebration up to April 14. Drop in and sample the great cuisine by Chef Stephen Hunter and cocktails of merit. Congratulations!

Big Basket Contest at The Edge, with a \$6 beer bust from 2000 to 2400; contest at 2200. One-dollar raffle tickets and Danny Williams emceeing. Biggest bulge gets \$100 cash and photo session with Joe Balducci, so buy your stocking stuffers now!

Friday, April 12

Golden Gate Guards MC beer bust at the SF-Eagle from 2100 to 2400. No details furnished at my deadline. Is the lack of communication due to more resignations in that group? Tsk-tsk.

Bathhouse (style) & Steam Party at the Turf Club in Hayward from 2100, with a \$5 beer bust, contest for sexiest and most outrageous towels, towel-dancing contest and snapping towel divas. Roger Luttrell and Randy Wright certainly know how to wreak havoc!

Saturday, April 13

Knights of Malta/Cable Car Chapter celebrates its fourth anniversary from 1800 to 2100 on the SF-Eagle patio tonight. Admittance by club overlay or invitation in hand. Congratulations to a group of heavy-duty workers and fundraisers!

Beartoonist Fran Frisch hosts an Aries party at Moby Dick from 1500 to 1900 for \$6, featuring Elephant Red Beer and benefiting the Godfather Service Fund. Go Fran! Go Red! Go all you Rams!

Emperor Steve and Empress Cockatielia get invested and name their court at the Holiday Inn on Van Ness/Pine. Doors open 1800; ceremonies at 1900. Only \$10 and tix available at Polk Gulch and Castro Station. This one should be fun. We hope for a fruitful reign!

Sunday, April 14

Live entertainment at Hamburger Mary's every Sunday. Today it's Americana Music with Absent Iris. Get down!

Hole in the Wall (8th and Folsom) celebrates its second anniversary with happy hour prices and surprises all night. (Will Lucky, everyone's favorite Dalmatian, be in attendance?) Certainly a SoMa landmark and high on everyone's "must" list.

Monday, April 15

Continuing with their second anniversary celebration, the Hole in the Wall splurges with happy hour prices, anniversary pins and a banquet - all in the evening. Congratulations and best wishes for even more success. Don't miss it!

Tuesday, April 16

Mr. Daddy's Leather Gary Virginia presents Tattoo Tuesday, 2000-2300, with a \$6 beer bust. Win prizes for your ink in the most tattoos, most bizarre tattoo, largest tattoo and sexiest tattoo categories. All to benefit AIDS Benefits Counselors.

Wednesday, April 17

Leather Buddies monthly play party with doors open from 2030 to 2330. You must wear leather/uniforms/rubber and boots! No cologne! Not even Aramis. Featuring St. Andrew's Cross, slings, glory holes and an arena! Call 979-0242 for details.

"Tricks to Successful Tricking: Sex Club Etiquette" by Frank Strona at the Harvey Milk Institute at 1930. Call 621-4145 for details. Go to this event first and maybe you'll make out at Leather Buddies later!

Thursday, April 18

Selecting Mr. September '97 for the Bare Chest Calendar at the SF-Eagle, promptly at 2200. Knights of Malta \$6 beer bust in progress, too, from 2100 to 2400. Win \$100, fame, fortune, free suds.

Friday, April 19

Meet and greet the Mr. SF Leather contestants, judges, emcees, and VIPs from other cities, 2100-2400 at the SF-Eagle. Come and check out the contestants, one of whom will compete at IML in Chicago.

Saturday, April 20

Mr. San Francisco Leather '96 contest at the Alcazar Theatre on Geary. Doors open at 1900; contest and show at 2000. Tix are \$20 advance/\$25 door. Benefits the AIDS Emergency Fund.

you! For invite and more info, send a SASE to: SF Leathernecks, P.O. Box 14152, SF, CA 94114-0152.

Potpourri

Scores of people were at Pleasuredome last Thursday, April 4, to help the B.A.R. celebrate its 25th anniversary. A giant cake with the likeness of our esteemed publisher, Bob Ross, was on display - it was also his birthday cake! Hordes of VIPs (including Assemblywoman Carole Migden) and just plain readers/admirers hobnobbed, drank, ate and joined in the celebration.

Senator and Mrs. Milton Marks were on hand, of course, and presented Bob with a certificate of merit from the California Senate. Shan Carr did a great job emceeing, and Pussy Tourette had them in stitches. A good time was had by all.

Meanwhile, that same night at Greg's Ballroom in San Jose, the Full Moon Party, co-sponsored by Coors Brewing with Graylin Thornton and Wolf Harmon, provided a pleasant interlude with Omar Moseley and others entertaining. In the end, \$700 was raised, and the Coors people matched that amount with a cool \$1000. The surprise of the evening was the superb vocal stylings of Mr. San Jose Leather Kevin Roche.

Da Mayor Willie B., Chastity Bono, Beach Blanket Babylon diva Dana Adkins and Joan Jett Blakk were just a few of the glitterati on hand at the Annual Cable Car Awards last Saturday, April 6. In its 22nd year, the board of directors saw fit to bestow honors on



Scott "Boomer" Carson won the July 1997 page on the SoMa Bare Chest Calendar April 4. Mr. August '97 will be chosen April 11 at Chez Eagle.

several outstanding people who strive for perfection in their respective areas, including B.A.R. columnist Michael Botkin. The entertainment was fab; the show started promptly at 2000 and ended at exactly 10:20 p.m. Congratulations to Dyke Daddy

Skeeter Wildman for winning the Outstanding Women's Community Event for her SM/Erotic Performance show last year and to Russell Kassman, no stranger in leather circles, for being voted Man of the Year. It was a great night. ▼

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The Royal National Theatre's Tony Award-winning staging of J.B. Priestley's mystery. Tues.-Sun. thru 5/5. \$25-50. Tonight at 8pm. Golden Gate Theatre, Taylor at Market. 776-1999.

Maxim Vengerov

Gifted 21-yr-old violinist in recital with pianist Itamar Golan, performing Mozart, Beethoven, Prokofiev, Shostakovich. \$12-26. 8pm. Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley. (510) 642-9988.

Merry Alpern

Window series: photographs of hookers and johns. Thru 4/27. Shapiro Gallery, 250 Sutter. 398-6655.

Museum of the Future

Ian Pollock and Janet Silk's virtual exhibition based on contemporary telephone technology, free, 24 hours daily thru 7/1. 522-0605.

Todd Gray

Photographs of pop culture icons, with Jo Whaley's *Natura Morta*, still lifes. Tues.-Sat. thru 4/27. Robert Koch Gallery, 49 Geary. 421-0122.

Voyages

Keith Morrison shows 12 new paintings using Caribbean and global iconography. Thru 4/27. Bomani Gallery, 251 Post. 296-8677.

What About AIDS?

Exhibition "for the whole family"—science, art, remembrance, runs thru 6/2. \$9. The Exploratorium, 3601 Lyon. 563-7337.

Wed

Beach Blanket Babylon

Musical tour around the world now includes the Clintons, Dole, and the Village People. Wed.-Sun., call for times. \$18-45. Tonight at 8pm. Club Fugazi, 678 Green. 421-4222.

Violinist Maxim Vengerov was a child prodigy. Now he's 21 and performing Mozart, Beethoven, and Prokofiev with pianist Itamar Golan, at Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley. See Tuesday's listing.



Thomas Muller/Films



Artist Timothy Cummings exhibits his puppets, marionettes and paintings at Cat's Alley Club, through April. See Monday for details.

The Cherry Orchard

American Conservatory Theatre presents Chekhov's great human comedy. Thru 6/7, call for times. \$15-45. Geary Theatre, 415 Geary. 749-2ACT.

Evolution of an Epidemic

Panel discussion with AIDS activists, medical historians, in conjunction with "What About AIDS?" exhibition (see Tues.). 7:30pm. McBean Theatre, Exploratorium, 3601 Lyon. 563-7337.

Gay/Lesbian Open Reading

Writers read works-in-progress, free. 7:30pm. Modern Times, 888 Valencia. 282-9246.

Land of Paradox:

"Japanese Landscape Photography" exhibit, thru 5/19. \$4. Ansel Adams Center for Photo-

tography, 250 4th St. 495-7000.

A Park in Our House

Nilo Cruz's romantic comedy in the tradition of Chekhov. Wed.-Sun. thru 5/5. \$18-24. Tonight at 8:30pm. Magic Theatre, Bldg D, Fort Mason. 441-8822.

PHFFFT—

"An Air Pulsated Kinetic Sound Environment" installation piece by sound artist Trimpin. Thru 4/27. New Langton Arts, 1246 Folsom. 626-5416.

Slavs!

"Thinking About the Long-standing Problems of Virtue and Happiness," by Tony Kushner. Tues.-Sun. thru 4/19, call for times. \$21-50-\$34. Tonight at 8pm. Berkeley Rep Theatre, 2025 Addison, Berkeley. (510) 845-4700.

Thur

Bill Scott

Recent paintings by a colorist. Tues.-Sat. thru 4/30. Mulligan-Shanoski Gallery, 747 Post. 771-0663.

Done Time

Group exhibit includes Katherine Du Tiel, Michelle Handelman and Monte Cazazza, Evri Kwong, more. Reception tonight, 5:30pm. Thru 5/28. Catharine Clark Gallery, 49 Geary. 399-1439.

Felice Picano

Reading from *Dryland End*, free. 7:30pm. A Different Light, 489 Castro. 431-0891.

Mexican Modernism

Works of Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera and other modernists from the Gelman Collection, thru 9/8. \$7. SFMOMA, 151 3rd St. 357-4000.

Of Light...and Darkness

Ney Fonseca Dance Group performs six dances inspired by the resilience of the gay/lesbian community. Thurs.-Sun. at 8pm. \$12.

New Performance Gallery, 3153 17th St. 863-9834.

Silk Stockings

42nd St. Moon's Lost Musical Series presents '50s musical satire of Soviet Russia, music by Cole Porter. Thurs.-Sun. thru 4/28, call for times. \$18. Tonight at 8pm. New Conservatory Theatre, 25 Van Ness. 861-8972.

The Star

Matthew Martin is Bette Davis in Artful Circle Theatre's drag parody, opens tonight. Thurs.-Sat. thru 6/1. \$15. Tonight at 8pm. Cable Car Theatre, 430 Mason. 956-8497.

Something About Us

Andrew Alt's comedy opens: gay friendship, mourning and sexual initiation. Wed.-Sat. at 8pm thru 5/18. \$12-16. New Conservatory Theatre, 25 Van Ness. 861-8972.

Tina Modotti

Exhibition of work by modernist photographer, thru 6/2. \$7. SFMOMA, 151 3rd St. 357-4000.

Views from the Heartland

Three Midwest landscape artists, Charles Basham, Dorothy Morgan and Vlada Vukadinovic, show paintings. Mon.-Fri. thru 5/11. John Pence Gallery, 750 Post. 441-1138.

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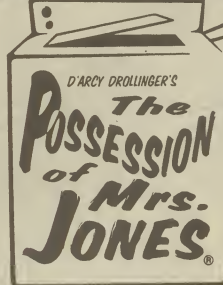
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Redoubtable read

by Deborah Peifer

Nowle's Passing by Edith Forbes; Seal, \$21.95

I never imagined that I'd be able to say this, but *Nowle's Passing*, Edith Forbes' second novel, is as good as her first novel, *Alma Rose*, and maybe even better. Forbes is a writer of consummate skill, with an ability to create characters and situations that are almost poetic in their intensity while still anchored in complete credibility.

Nowle's Passing is the story of Vernon Nowle's children and the ways in which they cope with their father's suicide. Chad, Darrell, and their sister, Vincie, come home to the family farm to sort out the details that arise at sudden death. A chance comment in the local newspaper leads Vincie to question whether her father did in fact commit suicide. That doubt, with its frightening ramifications, leads Vincie and her brothers to question everything they thought they knew about each other and themselves.

Now, it would be both possible and pleasurable to read *Nowle's Passing* for its intriguing plot alone. You could also enjoy the novel for its astonishingly rich characterizations. Forbes has an extraordinary gift for capturing in a few lines the essence of a character. These are not stereotypes, but finely-detailed, real human beings.

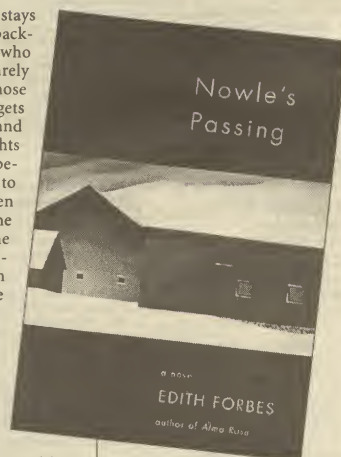
"Darrell had worshipped his mother, with the mute unswerving devotion of the unremarkable

child, the one who stays unnoticed in the background, the one who rarely gets petted, rarely needs scolding, whose easy disposition gets taken for granted and whose true thoughts rarely get spoken because no one thinks to ask for them. When Phoebe was killed ... he seemed like someone who had simply unplugged every nerve in his body, because the pain was too great."

With those few words, Forbes creates a living character, places him in the world, and helps understand both him and ourselves.

Yes, you can read *Nowle's Passing* for plot and character, but the reason it will take you three times as long to read it as another, lesser novel, is that Forbes' writing is so exceptional you will want to reread sentences and paragraphs for the sheer delight of experiencing her skill.

"Now, at the beginning of April, the dullness of the sky was not brightened by any color below. It was the grim season, when snow lay in dirty patches here and there, when fields, woods and dirt roads were impassable mud, when color was reduced to the range from gray to brown. The landscape was littered with the debris of departing winter but was not yet tinted with any sign of coming spring. The season, com-



ing as it did after months of sleet, ice and snow, seemed like one last test of fortitude, or possibly one last mocking insult."

There is not a superfluous word in that description, yet it captures both the season and the sense of the people who have to endure it.

As a reviewer, I read a lot of terrible novels, but every now and then a book comes along of such surpassing greatness that I am filled with gratitude. *Alma Rose* was such a novel. *Nowle's Passing* is another. If the sight of words on the page perfectly composed makes your heart sing and your spirit soar, you must read *Nowle's Passing*. ▼

Lips: plankbound again!

by Sweet Lips

The Gangway at 841 Larkin has two new owners, and they're both doing a fantastic job. Together, they've transformed the place into a truly inviting bar, and, yes, John Wise is still there nights. Around the corner, at old Rick's Gold Room, Empress Maxine is still doing her thing.

And, yes, I'm back at Kimo's after a two-week hiatus. Please drop in Wednesday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Unfortunately, though, I can't have any drinks with you! (There's a story here, but let's save it for a rainy day, eh?)

Kimo's recently donated \$5,000 to the AIDS Memorial Grove. The money came from several different fundraisers at the bar and from customer donations. A tree in memory of Craig Roday was planted at the entrance to the grove.

Peering into my crystal balls, I see it's time for birthday greetings to go out to Cora of the Cinch (sorry I'm late!); my favorite publisher, Bob Ross, on April 2 (sorry, I'm late again!); and the effervescent Michael Greer on April 20. Of course, we don't want to forget the fabulous Frank Dunbar on April 15. Eat, drink and be fairy for time is fleeting!

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Though I've plugged it here before, don't you dare forget the fabulous Closet Ball on May 4. Tickets are going like hot cakes, so call 864-0673 ASAP. It's always a great show

when a man gets his mammaries, and David Webb is a flawless emcee.

The Gate Bar and Restaurant at Pine and Jones has a new chef, Paul, and I hear the food is great, so give them a try.

The Cinch Saloon's "Farewell Turnabout Party" for Brett Thompson is on Sunday, April 21 from 4 p.m. on. The entire staff will be in drag, so you know this is going to be a blast! You know I'll be there!

The Phone Booth will hold another Anniversary Party on Friday, April 12. Linda will celebrate her 22nd anniversary there on Friday the 12th, from 5 p.m. on. Food, of course, will be supplied by Dennis Tyler. Linda always does a great job, so don't miss it. ▼

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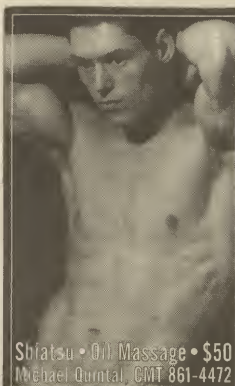
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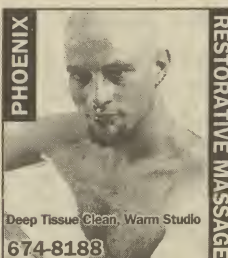
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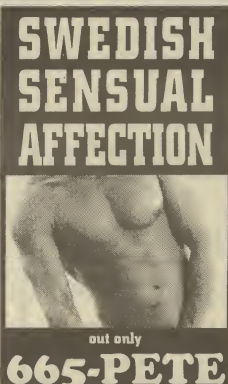
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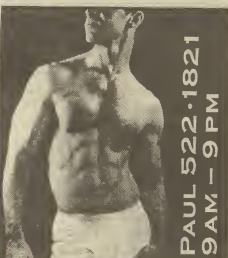
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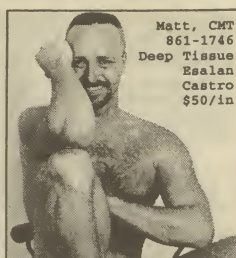
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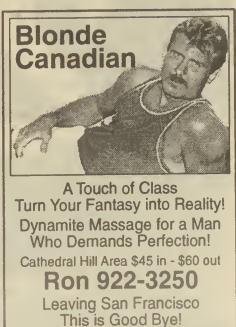


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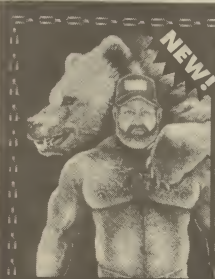
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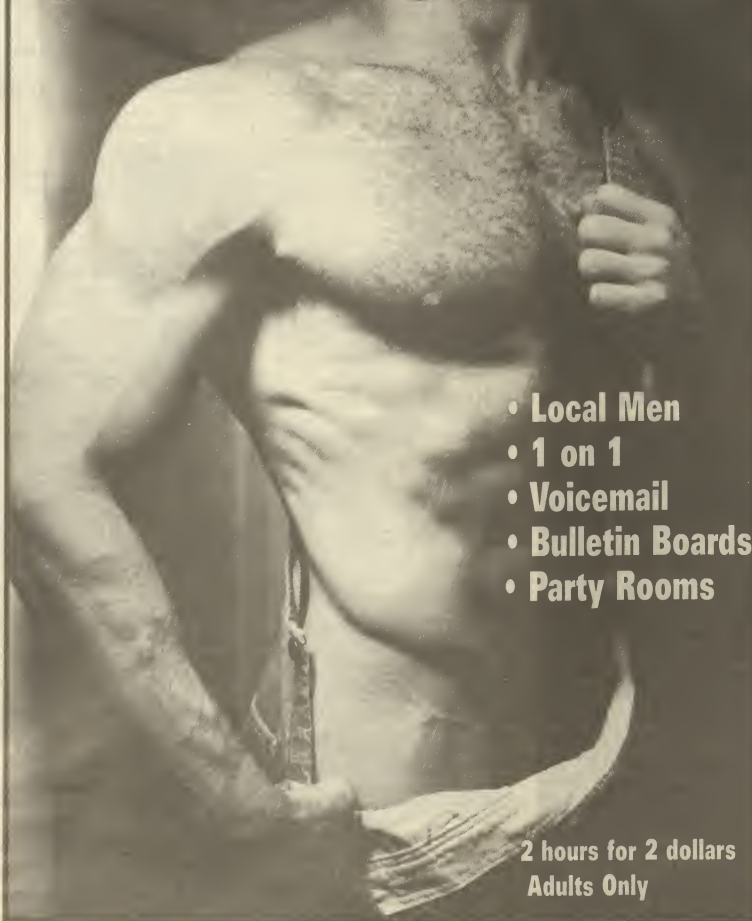
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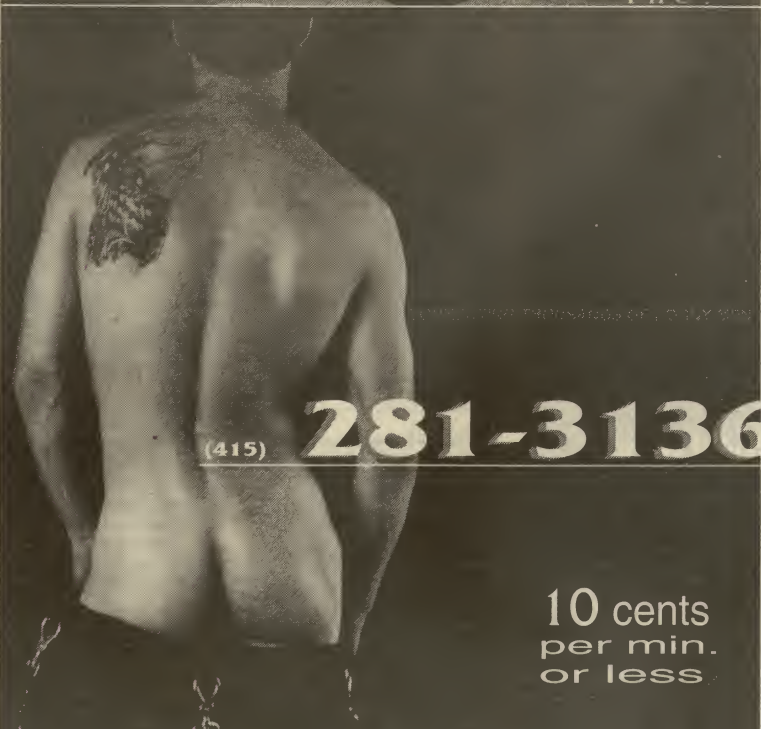
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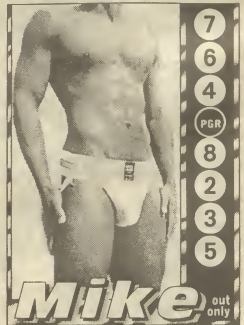
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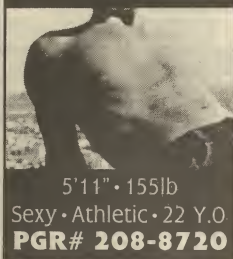
PAGER 764-6326



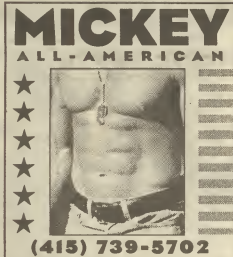
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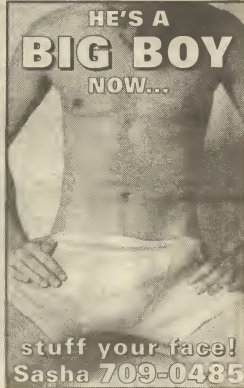
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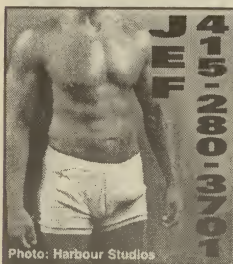
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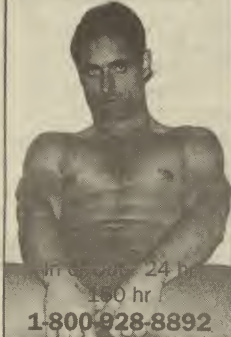
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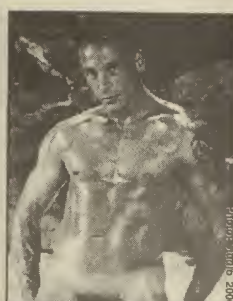
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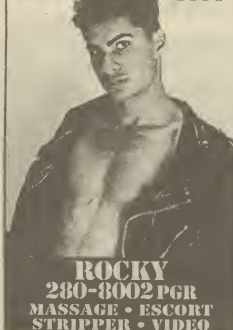
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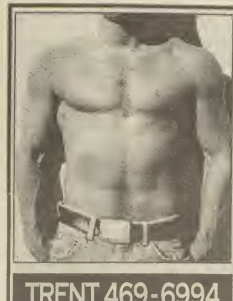
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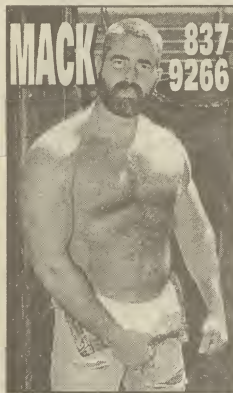
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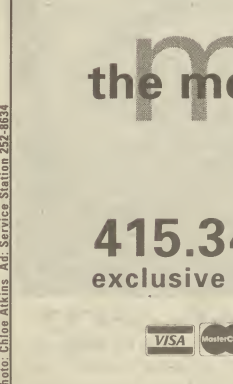


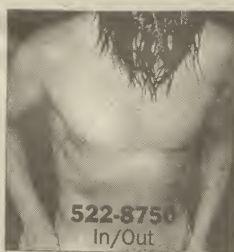
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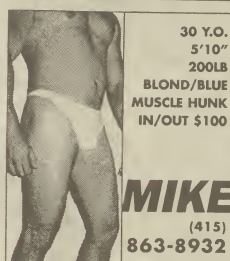
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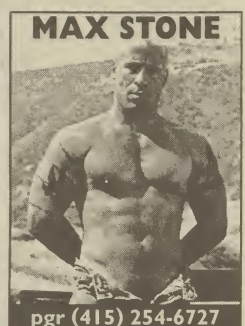
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